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ABSTRACT

Directed towards elementary teachers interested in improving their writing programs, this guide focuses on motivating teachers to involve themselves and their students in the writing process. Each of the 12 chapters contains practical step-by-step procedures on implementing the writing process, and sample activities are illustrated. The first chapter discusses preparations needed for the classroom writing process, such as student writing folders, materials for writing, and scheduling a daily writing time. The second chapter deals with activities which introduce the writing process to students, including the question-and-answer technique, first draft writing and "inventive" spelling, and story telling. Other chapters include: (1) "Conferencing and Revising"; (2) "Choosing Topics for Storywriting"; (3) "Developing a Sense of Authorship"; (4) "Publishing Student Writing"; (5) "The Computer and the Writing Process"; (6) "How Can Parents Help?" (7) "Evaluation of Student Writing"; and (8) "Student Worksheets." (Student writing models are included, and 14 references are appended.) (MM)

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All Write!

A Teacher's Guide to Writing, Grades K to 6

Susan Schwartz

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Foreword

This book is dedicated to:

Lorraine, whose friendship and memory I will ever value;

My husband Saul and my children Marnie, Rena, and Michael, who gave me much support and encouragement during my involvement with this book;

My family and close friends, who listened and believed in me;

Josie Richter and David Stanley, who started me down the path that led to true enjoyment of writing;

Bill Given, whose belief in the importance of writing as the key to academic success inspired me to pursue this book;

Noreen Hardwick, whose enthusiastic "words of wisdom" provided me with many valuable ideas;

Doreen Hall, whose expert advice and hours of editing encouraged me at a time when I needed it most.

Special acknowledgements and thanks to those people who field-tested many of the ideas in this book: Mindy Pollishuke, North York Board of Education; Sharon Michalowski, York Region Board of Education; Terri Browman and Linda Cline, Associated Hebrew Schools; and the staff, students, and parents of Arbor Glen Public School, North York Board of Education.

Introduction

Writing Isn't Easy

Writing isn't easy
I sit here thinking
Images in my mind
Mulling over and over
Yearning to emerge
Onto paper.

But do I dare
To write it down
To expose myself on paper
Stripped bare
To share my writing
My innermost self
To take a risk!
Others might laugh
Might wonder
Might look at me in a different light.

Writing isn't easy
It's a struggle to write
And often frustrating
To find the right word
The right phrase
The right topic.

Writing isn't easy
Yet it's all worthwhile
For when it's written and out
When it's on the paper
Not yet perfect but a start
It feels good
It feels satisfying
An exhilarating feeling
Of power
As if my words will live on
Forever.

Writing isn't easy
Creating
Composing
Designing with words
But I feel triumphant
More confident
And proud!

Susan Schwartz

This book is written as a guide and motivation for teachers who are interested in the subject of writing. The ideas in the book are aimed at elementary school teachers but are easy to adapt for use in the intermediate and secondary grades.

The book begins with a poem "Writing Isn't Easy" which is a sample of my own personal writing initiated during a university course for teachers. The participants were asked, as part of the course requirements, to write daily. This assignment was designed to make the teachers experience for themselves the frustrations and ultimate joys of writing with the purpose of making them into better teachers of writing. The philosophy behind this is sound. A teacher who does not enjoy writing may not be as effective as the teacher who writes fluently and who displays a love and enthusiasm for writing. Also, a teacher who values writing may be more motivated to change and to learn various ways to teach children the necessary thinking skills that underlie writing.

The instructors in the course wrote too and shared their writing with us. What this modelling illustrated was modelling itself, and I began to think about the value of modelling in my own classroom. Teachers should be modelling writing often, illustrating to their students that writing is not always easy but is a necessary and purposeful real-life activity. Writing is not just a "for-the-teacher" activity, but is a two-way affair, a means of communicating real thoughts and information.

At first, I was insecure about my own ability to write, thinking that proficiency in writing was something that I seemed somehow to lack. I was hesitant about sharing my writing for fear of being deemed inadequate and for fear of negative reactions by others. Also, the task of choosing a topic to write about frustrated me since I was conditioned by my schooling and by my background to the need for direction and guidance. It took several attempts at writing for me to realize that writing involves a great deal of risk-taking and soul-searching.

This daily writing program awoke in me a wealth of emotions. With encouragement and continued attempts at writing in a relaxed, sharing atmosphere, my initial frustrations and fears subsided. I wrote about my feelings and innermost thoughts. I wrote not only during the classroom writing time, but at home, in the chiropractor's office, and walking to class from my car into the school building. I began writing poetry, which I had never attempted before in my life, and I even began writing a novel. I became quite inspired and this surprised me.

I realized that I had liberated myself of my earlier inhibitions to write. I felt safe enough to expose myself on paper and I was eventually able to share my writing with others. My writing gave me greater self-confidence, a sense of satisfaction and peace, and much enjoyment.

The writing process had indeed worked for me, an adult. My next question was "Would it work for children?" I then attempted to introduce my own twin daughters, six years old at the time, to writing, and in September of that year and for the next few years I began experimenting with different aspects of the writing process

with my students and with fellow teachers. To further my own studies, I began avidly reading the works of well-known authors on writing, such as Donald Graves, Lucy McCormick Calkins, Nancy Atwell, Frank Smith, Andrew Wilkinson, and numerous others. I experimented, modified, and extended many of the ideas I read and heard about. I worked to make them meaningful and practical for me.

This book is an attempt to motivate teachers to involve themselves and their students in the process of writing. Practical and easy to follow, step-by-step procedures on implementing the writing process in the classroom are presented. Sample activities are illustrated.

Reactions to this effort have been quite enthusiastic and positive. One teacher summarized it well when she said:

> "I think I can do it. I **want** to do it. Your book contains so many practical and easy-to-follow ideas — everything I would ever want to know about the writing process — all in one neat package."

CHAPTER 1

Preparations for the Writing Process in the Classroom

Prior to involving students in the writing process, teachers should consider carefully each of the following aspects:

- A Daily Writing Time
- The Writing Folder
- Materials Needed

Daily Writing Time

For the process of writing to be successful, teachers should set aside a time in their schedules for writing *every* day. My own experience with daily writing illustrated the benefits. For me, daily writing produced improvements in attitute towards writing, as well as improvements in self-confidence, in risk-taking ability, and in the quantity and quality of my writing. Recent research is in agreement and has proven that, in order for students to become fluent readers, they must read, and subsequently, in order for them to become fluent writers, they must write, daily and often. As one grade 6 teacher stated:

> "With a change to daily writing, my students became more fluent writers. Their attitudes towards writing and towards school in general became more positive, they were better able to express themselves on paper, and their writing skills, in all subject areas, improved greatly."

In my own classroom, nine to nine-thirty in the morning is writing time. I chose this time slot because of my own personal experience with writing. For me, the first thing in the morning is a prime time.

Another time that has proven successful is right after an independent silent reading time. Often, the children choose ideas for their writing from the books that they have been reading.

The time set aside for writing is an individual decision, but authorities on writing agree that the same basic routine each day is

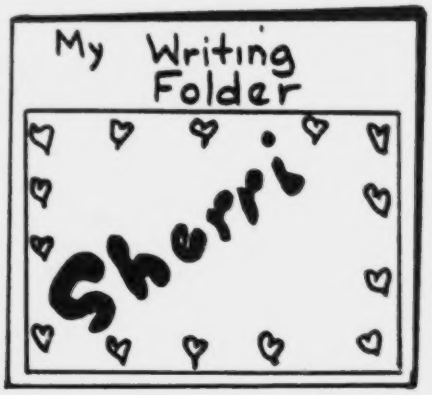
the most effective way to instil the habit of daily writing practices. If children are familiar with the routine, writing time is not lost on motivational gimmicks.

Teachers who already have a set time for daily writing but call it **journal writing time** need only to adopt this same time period and change to process writing. This change involves asking the students to write their daily entries into loose-leaf sheets of paper instead of into a notebook reserved for journal writing. In journal notebooks, students write a new journal entry each day. On loose-leaf papers, students build up this same collection of journal entries, even if only a few lines on each page. However, they are not restricted by the notebook and are encouraged to develop their stories, and even to return to them after some time has passed. With sheets of paper, students are more willing to re-read their stories, to edit, to revise, and to develop their writing for possible publication. They have more flexibility and freedom in their writing, and more easily begin to see themselves as writers and as authors.

The Writing Folder

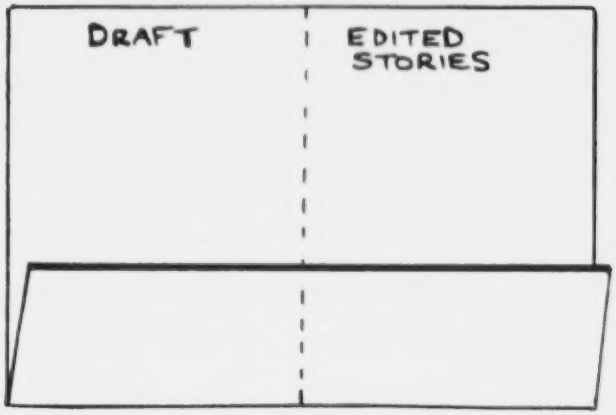
The writing folder is an important aspect in the implementation of the writing process. It contains all of the students' pieces of writing organized into one package. The stories within the folder reflect the student's progress and provide valuable information about the child.

The use of the folder promotes self-worth. Children are encouraged to decorate the front cover with their names in large, bold, and colorful print. As they continue to write and store their efforts, they begin to feel that "What I write is important!" and they experience ownership and pride in their accomplishments.



A good idea is to have the folders ready for use at the time of the students' first writing attempts. The folders are often supplied, ready-made, by the school boards, and are made out of cardboard or plastic material. If these are not available, folders may be made by teachers, or even by students (depending on their stage of motor development). Large sheets of construction paper or lightweight caribou board may be used.

First fold paper in half. Then fold a flap up from the bottom. The flap is then secured and stapled on each side and on the fold.

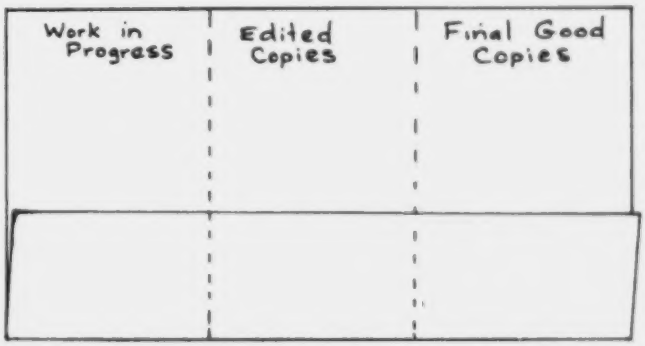


This particular folder allows for two places in which to hold stories — one for the stories that have been **edited**, and one for the **draft** copies of stories. (Draft copies of stories are stories that are in progress, stories that have been initiated in the past but have been abandoned for one reason or another, or stories that have been completed, but not edited.)

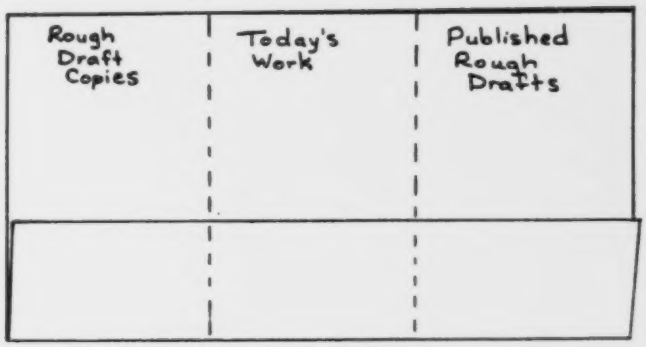
A good organizational technique, which also allows the children to focus on their previous day's work, is to ask them to place *first* in their folder the story that they are working on at the present time. This story is then seen and read immediately when the folder is opened.

Another version of the folder employs three flaps.

In this version, the third flap is often not well used since final good copies of stories are usually displayed and published, and books are usually stored on the shelves, either in the classroom or in the library.



Another way to organize a three-flap folder is to have a place for all *Rough Draft Copies* (stories that have been initiated, completed, worked on, and/or edited), a place for *Today's Work* (the specific story being worked on at the present time), and a place for *Published Rough Drafts* (rough draft copies of the stories that have been published in some way).



The bottom inside flaps of the writing folder may also be put to good use. One flap might contain the following chart.

This page becomes a record of the child's writing attempts. The third column, reserved for the "Date Finished," need not necessarily be filled in for every story that is written. Children make the decision to complete a story that they have started. They are free to leave a story unfinished and then to return to it after several weeks to add to it or to complete it.

Things I have written	Date Started	Date Finished

Another flap might contain a place for the teacher's comments.

Teacher's Comments	Date

As well as being a record of a writing conference (see the section on "Conferencing" p. 25) and an aid to report card writing, this page serves to provide positive reinforcement and guidance for the student. Simply writing "Excellent" "Very good," or "Good" in response to a student's story might seem appropriate, but such comments do not help to improve writing. A much more meaningful way is to comment specifically on what it is you like about the story or on some aspect or event in the story. Comments should be personal and encouraging.

Also, if some aspect of the story is unclear or disappointing, the teacher writes a suggestion in the form of a question which may lead the child into making revisions. Remember the story you are commenting on is usually a first or second draft and the children are still free to change it.

I liked the words you used to describe the mess. What happened when your mother saw it?

Teachers must be careful to write comments regularly on this form. If only one or two comments appear during a lengthy period of time, parents and administrators might jump to the incorrect conclusion that the teacher has only evaluated the child's work once or twice during that time period. A teacher deciding to use this form must be extremely conscientious in doing so.

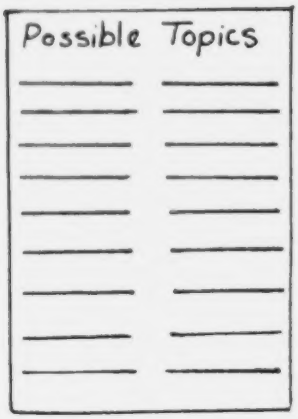
Another flap might hold a record of the students' published efforts.

Things I have Published	Type of Book	Date Completed

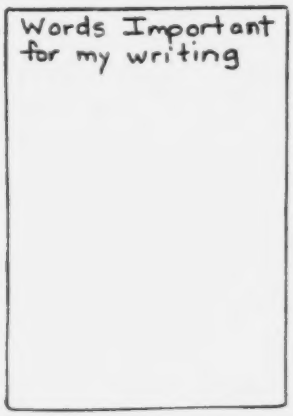
The inside of a three-flap writing folder might, therefore, hold a great deal of information.

Rough Draft Copies			Today's Work		Published Rough Drafts		
Things I have written	Date Started	Date Finished	Teacher's Comments	Date	Things I have Published	Type of Book	Date

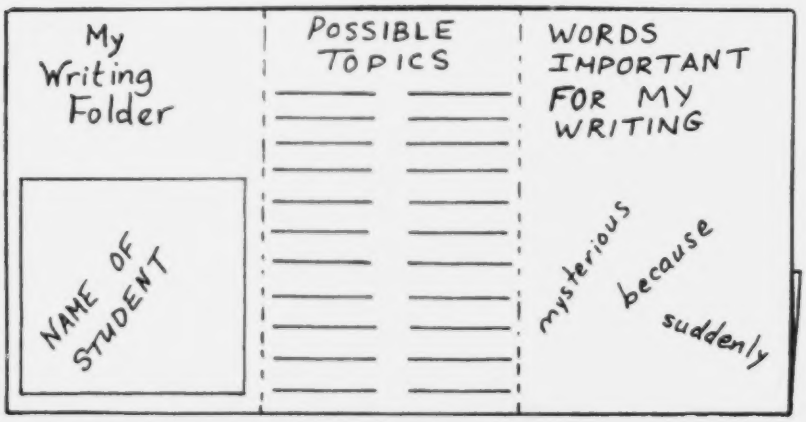
The place for recording possible topics for storywriting is an important part of the folder. When students finish writing a story, they are encouraged to choose another story from their individual lists of topics on their folders. (See the section on "Brainstorming", pp. 31-35.) This practice reinforces the idea that writing is an ongoing process.



A place for recording words important to students' writing is useful for students who are experiencing difficulty with the spelling of common words.



The outside of a three-flap writing folder could thus contain important information.



Materials Needed

A. A variety of things to write on, as well as a variety of writing tools to accommodate creativity and different styles of writing, should be available to the student writers.

Things to Write On

blank paper
lined paper
newsprint
chart paper
graph paper
newspaper
construction paper
cardboard
envelopes
adding machine tapes
clear acetate
rocks
fabric
slates
old boxes or cartons

Things to Write With

pencils
pens
wax crayons
pencil crayons
markers
chalk
pastals
paint and brushes
typewriter
computer
letters or words cut out of magazines and newspapers

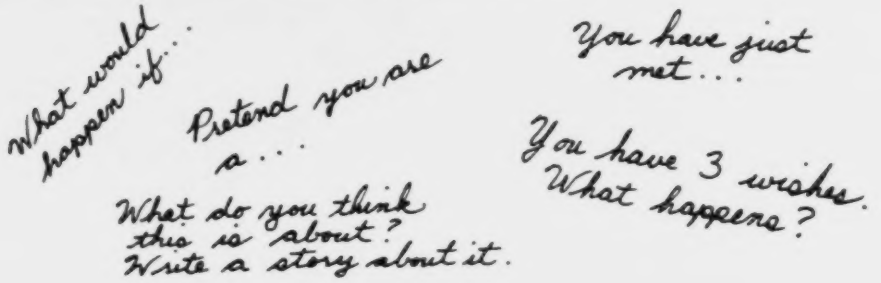
B. *Print resources* should also be available for the student writers. For example, a variety of dictionaries and thesauruses should be easily accessible. A reading centre might house library books, magazines, newspapers, and student books. Lists of words on charts or posters might be displayed as guides or tools for writing. Examples of different forms of writing might also be displayed to serve as models for student writing.

Different Forms of Writing

limericks
cinquaines
diamantes
haiku
couplets
letters (business letters and friendly letters)
sonnets
ballads
advertisements
invitations
headlines
newspaper articles or reports
editorials
interviews
scripts for plays
telegrams

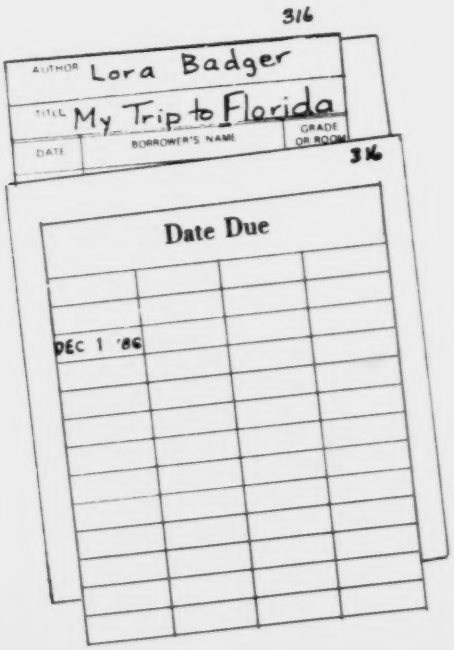
C. Motivational storytelling topic ideas may be displayed on a bulletin board or on cards for students to use. These topic ideas are useful in initiating storywriting for those students who may need help in getting started. (See the section "Begin with a Story Starter

or Topic Idea on a Card", p. 38. In primary classes, an *Idea Table* might hold concrete objects to initiate storywriting.

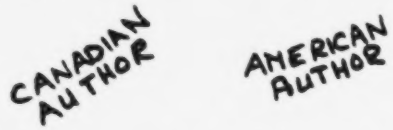

What would happen if...
Pretend you are a...
You have just met...
You have 3 wishes. What happens?
What do you think this is about? Write a story about it.

D. Fabric, wallpaper, mactac, and/or cardboard may be collected to be used as the covers of the books to be published. (It is a good idea to have book covers made in advance. For directions on how to make paperback and hardcover book covers, see the section "Publishing Student Writing," p. 65.)

E. Library card forms and book pocket envelopes may be ready for students to paste at the back of their published books. Children who read the published books are encouraged to sign their name, the date, and their grade or room number on the card, just as if they were signing out a book by a professional author. These student books may be reserved for a classroom library collection, or may be circulated through the school library for other children in other classes and grades to read. This process adds a sense of authenticity and importance to the students' published books.



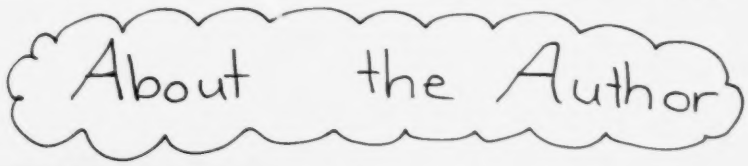
F. A stamp denoting the author as Canadian or American can be used to add emphasis to the fact that students are authors too. This often motivates students to read books by authors who reside in their own country.



Canadian or American author stickers or flag stickers can be purchased from library supply distributors. These are often quite colorful and may be used instead of, or along with, the stamp. The school librarian can order these stickers for the school.

G. Teachers photocopy their students' individual class photographs to be used in the publishing process. These photograph copies are kept in a file folder or box in the classroom, and every time a child finishes publishing a book, he/she goes to the file, cuts out his/her photo and glues it into the back of the published book on a page entitled "About the Author." This page contains factual information about the student author's life and is written by the student author in question. Another idea is to have another student in the class interview the student author, and this student then writes the biographical article to be included on the "About the Author" page. This feature of the published book again add authenticity to the final published book.

The following is an example of an "About the Author" page.



Hi my name is Rena. I have an identical twin sister named Marnie. We are 8 years old. I have a brother Michael. Michael is 3 years old. I love to write stories.

CHAPTER 2

One Way to Begin

This section deals with activities describing **one way** to begin the writing process with students. The practices presented have been informally field-tested over the past five years by primary and junior teachers with excellent results.

Teachers' comments illustrate the effectiveness of these activities.

> "The management techniques suggested were easy to establish and were conducive to a positive learning environment. Children were taught how to share stories without disturbing others around them. I could see at a glance those who were sharing, those who were writing, and those who needed help."
>
> "Co-operative learning skills are encouraged through these activities. Students are given practice in working together, in sharing ideas and storylines, in listening critically to each other, and in helping each other. Major life skills are continuously being reinforced."
>
> "My students became more motivated to write. They turned to their writing whenever they had a spare moment and some even took their stories home to work on."
>
> "My whole classroom atmosphere changed. I saw an increase in motivation towards writing which seemed to be transferred to an increase in positive attitudes towards school in general."
>
> "My students displayed less frustration while writing and gained self-confidence and pride in their own abilities."

The following are specific introductory lessons which provide motivation for writing and serve to develop the practices and routines necessary in establishing the process of writing.

The Question-and-Answer Technique

Teacher Demonstration

In this lesson, the teacher brings in a personal object which has a story behind it. This object may be hidden in a mystery can or box

and the students are encouraged to examine it closely. They then question the teacher to obtain information and to discover the story behind it.

The teacher answers the students' questions precisely and records these questions on a chart. Afterwards, the teacher focusses the students' attention on the types of questions asked and on the quality of responses given.

Sample Lesson

Teacher:

"I have something in this bag that has a story behind it. I'm not going to simply tell you the story. I want you to **draw** the story out of me by asking me questions."

(The teacher takes a puppet out of the bag and shows it to the class. She passes it around the group allowing the students to touch and discuss it quietly. She then takes it and puts it at the front of the room.)

"All right now. I have a story about this object. Do you have any questions?"

Student Questions	**Teacher Responses**
Is it a doll?	No.
Is it a puppet?	Yes.
What is it supposed to be?	It is a witch puppet.
Did you make it?	Yes, but not by myself.
Who helped you?	My daughters helped me.
When did you make it?	We made it about two months ago.
Where did you make it?	We made it at home.
How long did it take?	It took about 6 hours in total, but we worked in two sessions, two weekends in a row.
Why did you need to work in two sessions?	The first weekend, we made the head and the body. We made it out of paper mache so we had to allow it to dry for a week. We worked on it again the next weekend.
How did you make it?	We used an empty javex bottle for the head, a paper towel roll for the neck, and for the eyes we used small round bars of decorator soap. We made the nose out of a piece of egg carton. We covered everything with strips of newspaper dipped in wallpaper paste. We let it dry and then we painted it. We glued wool on for the hair.

Why did you make it?	My daughters wanted to entertain the little children at my son's third birthday party, so we decided to write, practise and perform a play. We needed a witch for the play . . .

The types of questions asked and the responses given are analysed, and the students begin to understand that different questions elicit different types of information.

- Questions beginning with "who", "what", "when", and "where" produce factual, to the point information.
- Questions beginning with "how" and "why" produce a great wealth of information.
- Questions which require a yes or no answer do not produce a lot of information at all but simply confirm or negate already suspected facts.

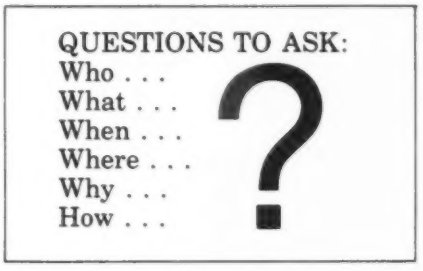
With this understanding, the students become more aware of good questioning techniques.

Student Practice

The students are asked to bring in an object of their own with a story behind it. If the object is too large or too bulky to carry to school, or if the object is too valuable or fragile, the students are asked to draw a picture of it and bring the picture to school. A photograph which recalls a personal experience or trip is also acceptable.

Guided Practice

One student at a time is chosen to show an object in front of the class. The class participates in questioning to try to discover the storyline behind the object. The students are again reminded of the types of questions to ask. A poster reinforcing the questions to ask is displayed and posted.



Independent Practice

The students are asked to work together in pairs, one person questioning and the other one responding. Each listens carefully to the other's response.

Telling the Story

The next step is to encourage the students to **tell** a story about their object. They have been questioned in depth and are usually ready to arrange their ideas in sequence into a storyline. The following questions might be ones asked by the teacher to initiate responses from the students.

How will you start your story about your object?
What happens first?
What happens next?
How does your story end?

Students do not always have to stick to the true facts about their object. Using imagination adds excitement and/or a sense of fantasy to the storylines.

What imaginative or magical thing might now happen to the witch puppet?

Ideas are elicited from the class.

She might start to move by herself.
She might turn into a real witch and put a spell on you.
She might start to talk.
Someone might steal her.
She might get lost.

Teacher Demonstration

The teacher models for the students and begins telling a story about one of the objects brought to class. She uses one of her own objects (for example, the witch puppet), or she may choose one of the children's objects.

After uttering several sentences, the teacher stops, pretends she is "stuck," and encourages the students to help in the telling of the story. They participate in adding sentences one at a time to the storyline.

What happens next in the story?
Tell me the next sentence for this story.

OR

The teacher may also encourage the students again to *ask questions* to help in the retelling of the story.

Oh my. What happens next? Now don't tell me. Help me to remember. Ask me questions to remind me.

Guided Practice

To reinforce this storytelling activity, the teacher again has individual students come up to tell their stories to the class. The

listening students are encouraged to **stop** the storyteller to ask questions if the story being told is unclear, or if the storyteller is "stuck" and needs help with the storyline.

Independent Practice

The students are paired up and asked to tell their stories to their partners. Again, the listeners are encouraged to ask questions if necessary to aid in the telling of the story.

NOTE: If students are experiencing difficulty in telling stories about their objects, the teacher can ask them to draw a picture of it. See the section "Begin with a Picture," p. 36, for another effective way to begin.

Value

These introductory activities, involving questioning, answering, telling, and active listening, set the foundation for the practices and routines necessary in implementing the writing process in the classroom.

- Students are more aware of good questioning techniques and become more critical questioners.
- Students have practice in "talking-out" and sharing their ideas and storylines before they write. The more times they tell their stories, the clearer their ideas become.
- The students telling the stories are challenged to answer questions that they would not otherwise have thought about.
- The listening students begin to develop more critical listening skills.
- The listening students gain ideas and possible topics for their own stories.
- Both parties interacting in these positive learning situations gain reinforcement of the important life skills of co-operation, sharing, and helping others. This, in turn, encourages independence and initiative. Later, if students need assistance, they have the experience and know-how to seek out a friend to get the help they need.
- The teacher is freed to observe, assist, and encourage individuals or small groups of children, and also to write too, as a model for the students.

A Management Technique

An increased noise level is inevitable when children are sharing ideas and discussing together. The concern is that some children cannot concentrate in a noisy environment and need a quiet time for writing. The following management technique accommodates the different learning styles of children while at the same time encourages active interaction.

When the students discuss their writing, they choose a spot in the room other than at their desks. They are encouraged to talk softly

and not disturb others around them. The desk areas are reserved for **silent** writing. In this way, students who are writing are not being disturbed by loud discussion, and the students sharing ideas gain increased privacy.

The first time this technique is used, the teacher chooses the two students to work together, but later, the students should be allowed to choose their own partners, keeping in mind that they must vary their choices and not always choose their best friend. At the beginning, and especially in primary classes, the students benefit from a teacher-directed demonstration.

Teacher:	John, choose your partner.
John:	O.K. I pick Jason.
Teacher:	All right. John and Jason, please stand. I'd like both of you to go to that corner. Sit down with your objects. Now Jason, ask John questions about his object, and Jason, you answer. When you know everything about the object and the story behind the object, then you Jason, ask John questions about his object. When you are finished, come back to your seats and . . .

It is essential that students have a directed activity to return to when they get to their seats. Later, when they are well into the writing process, they know that when they return to their seats, it is time for them to write.

With this management technique, the teacher sees immediately those who are sharing and those who are writing. The students at their desks are writing silently. The students sitting on the floor are free to discuss without disturbing the thought processes of those involved in writing.

Once the students become accustomed to this routine, they are encouraged to go up to a student of their choice and ask politely if he/she would listen and share ideas. The person who has been asked to listen is also encouraged to share his/her writing (no matter what stage it is at). Sharing during the process of writing only helps to improve content and storyline. It aids in plot and character development, in formalizing new ideas, and in organizing information in a sequential order. Children know that they can return to their stories immediately when they get to their seats. Sharing (which I later refer to as "Conferencing") is not an interruption but an important step in the process of writing.

First Draft Writing and "Inventive" Spelling

After the students have "talked-out" their stories in pairs, they are ready for the next step. In this lesson, the teacher demonstrates the rules or guidelines to follow in first draft writing.

Teacher Demonstration

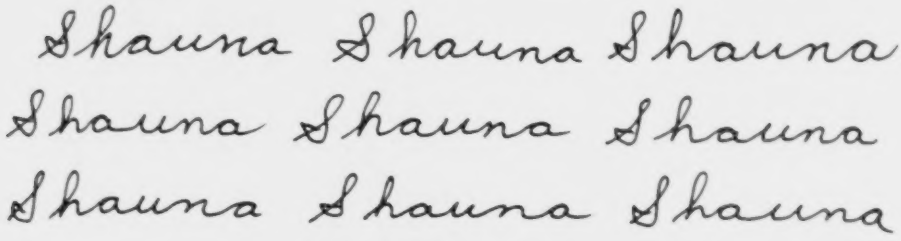
- One student is asked to come to the front of the classroom to tell the story about his/her object.
- As the student tells the story, the teacher records three or four of the sentences on the chart, board, or overhead projector.
- The teacher purposely writes on the chart quickly, using rather messy (yet legible) handwriting or printing. Words are crossed out. The teacher writes on every other line.
- Afterwards, the writing is examined and discussed, and the following list is developed with the students. It is posted for the students to refer to.

First Draft Writing

1. Write as fast as you can, but write legibly.
2. Do not use an eraser to slow you down, but cross out incorrect words or sentences.
3. Don't worry about spelling. Use "inventive spelling."
4. Write on every other line and use only one side of the paper.

The purpose of this lesson is for the teacher to model first draft writing. The students see that first draft writing is simply a rough draft of their ideas. They are encouraged to record their thoughts from their heads to the paper as quickly as possible.

An effective activity to try just before students begin writing is to ask them to turn their pages over, and at the word "Go", write their individual names over and over again as quickly as possible for a period of one minute. At the end of the time allowed, they are told that they should try to record their thoughts just as quickly.



9 words in one minute

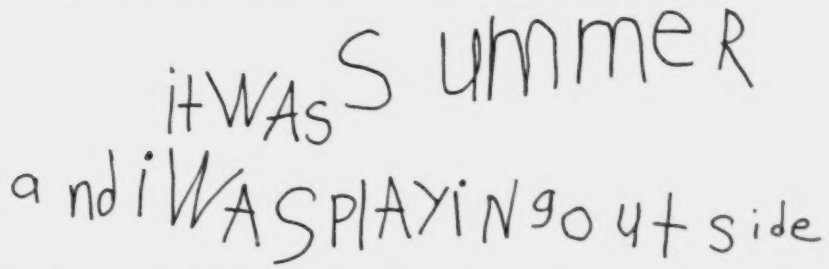
Students are cautioned to write legibly so that **they** are able to read what they have written. They write their words on every other line which leaves space to add words or whole paragraphs later. They use only one side of the paper for they may need to cut and rearrange sentences or whole paragraphs when they are revising. It is emphasized that neatness and spelling are not important. The flow of ideas and content of writing are what matter.

An essential part of first draft writing is the concept of "inventive" spelling. Students are encouraged to invent the spelling of

words that they need for their writing. Stopping to look a word up in the dictionary, erasing a spelling mistake, or asking someone how to spell a word interrupts the flow of writing and is discouraged during writing time.

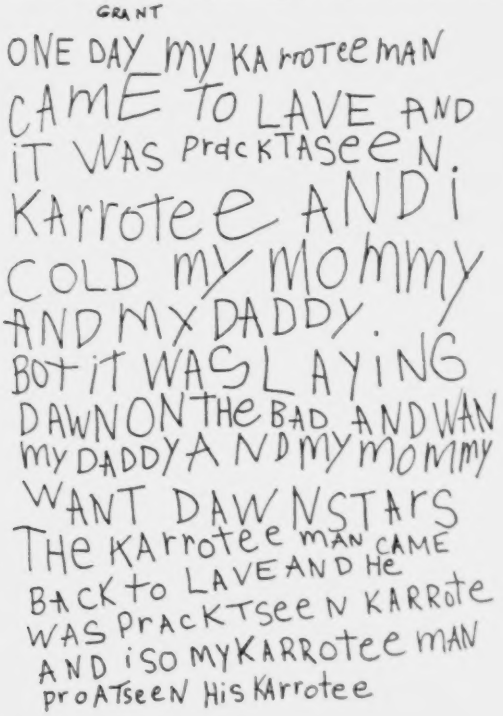
Students who have been exposed to a rigorous program of correct spelling will find it difficult to switch to "inventive" spelling. They will be afraid to make an error and will need to be reassured that they will not be criticized for their efforts. They will need to be convinced that spelling is not important during first draft writing, but that ideas are what count.

In a grade one class, Grant wrote the following story:



His teacher had introduced some of the words to the class. Grant asked him to spell the words he did not know, and he wrote them for him in his own personal dictionary book. Every word in Grant's story is perfect conventional spelling. However, his story is very short and his storyline is not very interesting.

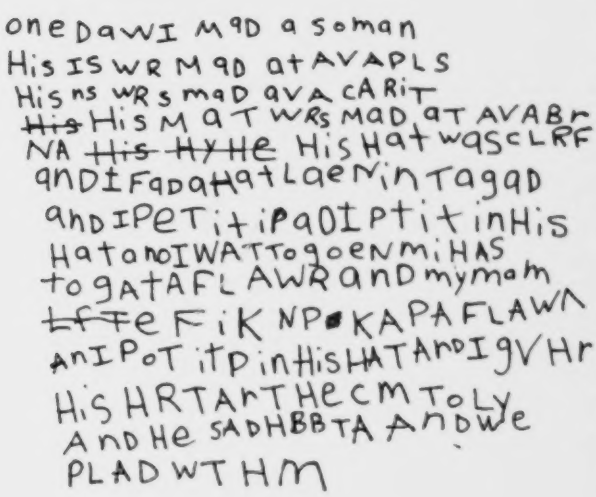
One month later, after having been exposed to first draft writing and inventive spelling, Grant wrote the following story:



One day my karate man came to life and it was practising karate and I called my mommy and daddy but it was lying down on the bed and when my daddy and my mommy went downstairs, the karate man came back to life and he was practising karate and I saw my karate man practising his karate.

He had been freed from the pressures of correct spelling. His motivation to write grew, the length of his story increased, and his imagination was unleashed.

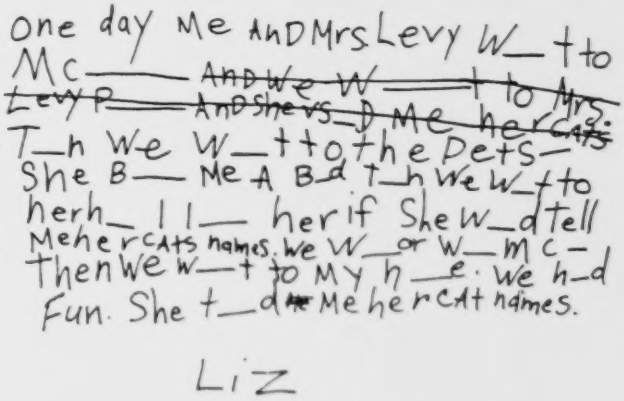
Six-year-old Angie became enthralled with writing when she was freed from spelling conventions. She had little idea about spacing and her words ran together, but the content of her writing was excellent. She was able to read her story without difficulty.



One day I made a snowman. His eyes were made out of apples. His nose was made out of a carrot. His mouth was made out of a banana. His hat was colorful and I found his hat lying on the ground and I picked it up and I put it on his head and I went to get a flower and my mom picked up the flower. I put it on his hat and I gave him his heart and then he came alive and he said happy birthday and we played with him.

Six-year-old Liz used the strategy of printing the first few letters and then drawing a line for the rest of the word.

One day me and Mrs. Levy went to McDonalds. Then we went to the pet store. She bought me a bird. Then we went to her house. I asked her if she would tell me her cats' names. We wore warm clothes. Then we went to my house. We had fun. She told me her cats' names.



Liz

This example illustrates a reluctance to use "inventive" spelling. However, the use of this strategy allows children to record their

thoughts easily onto paper. Children are usually able to read their writing book afterwards.

Nine-year-old Jenny used this strategy at the beginning of her grade 3 year.

JENNY Tues. Sept. 23 1986

When my Brithday is comeing Me my Sister and my u____ went to Sears to buy me a Brithday p____.He let me c____ a Brithday p____. I c____ a shera.And he b__ it and b____ it home.I like shera that I e__ go to my u___ and said can I have the Shera today.He said no you may not.So I went to my room.I Said when will I get my shera.Now my Brithday is coming I don't have to get ups____.When my Brithday is here I got my shera.I am very happy.The End

When my birthday is coming, me, my sister and my uncle went to Sears to buy me a birthday present. He let me choose a birthday present. I chose a Sherra. And he bought it and brought it home. I like Sherra that I even go to my uncle and said, "Can I have the Sherra today?" He said, "No you may not." So I went to my room. I said, "When will I get my Sherra?" Now my birthday is coming. I don't have to get upset. When my birthday is here, I got my Sherra. I am very happy. The End.

In looking at her writing six months later, we notice that she no longer needs this aid, but is spelling quite competently.

Wed Fed 3/87 My best teddy bear

~~One day I was playing with my dolls~~

I was at school working very herd Then the teacher said OK Kids come to the carpet and set down.I went to the carpet

and set down.My friend put her hand up. my teacher said yes and my friend said I have a show and tell. My teacher said OK. come up and tell the whow class what you got She came up and she said this is my teddy bear from my Grandmother and Grandfather.I like the teddy bear very much.When it's home time I ran home as fast as I could.When I got home my mother is here.I was happy because every time

Spelling involves problem-solving and risk-taking. It is a developmental process that improves with maturity and with practice, and is nurtured in a stimulating environment where children are encouraged to interact with language.

As a developmental process, spelling begins when little children put marks onto paper and begin to scribble. They often associate their scribble with a story. A great cognitive leap occurs when children recognize that letters carry sounds, that printed symbols carry meaning. They then begin to string letters together at random to represent words and thoughts.

In the phonetic stage of spelling development, all the surface sounds of words are represented as the child hears the words, knows the letters that are associated with the sounds, and tries to write them.

The first attempt at conventional spelling is evident when children recognize and write the letters in their own names. Conventional spelling is the final stage of development and is not simply a task of memorizing words. It develops differently in every individual and is often not mastered, even in adulthood.

Teachers help students learn to spell by encouraging them to write and to take risks with spelling. This is not to say that formal spelling should never be taught. In addition to this writing program, students should be studying words that they need and use often in their writing. Commonly misspelled words or words related to a theme or topic being studied are useful.

Students should also be presented with strategies for learning how to spell. One such strategy is to have children look at words visually, auditorially, and kinesthetically. They should be encouraged to look at the word, say it, close their eyes and visualize it, write it, and then check the spelling. If they are wrong, they should repeat the steps again. They are developing here a visual coding mechanism for recording spelling which is not simply a task of memorization.

A reasonable goal is to help children become the best spellers and the best writers possible, and this is accomplished by continuous exposure to language — to reading, to listening, to speaking and to writing.

CHAPTER 3

Conferencing and Revising

Conferencing

An essential component in the daily writing program is conferencing. Conferencing refers to any sharing or discussion about a piece of writing. Conferences may be between teacher and child, between child and child, between child and whole class, or between child and small group (conference group). The teacher acts as the facilitator encouraging active participation and sensitive questioning.

Flexible conference groups with the teacher can be arranged for those children who need discussion or input, or for groups of students who are experiencing difficulty with some aspect of their writing and need teacher direction.

Scheduled conference groups can also be organized in which small groups of children (about four to six in a group) work together with the teacher at a set time each week to share stories and gain input. The following is a sample of a schedule for writing conferences as found in a grade 5 class.

Writing Conferences

Monday: Patricia, Vadim S., Ramon, Maggy, Robert
Shoshana, Votti, Shi

Tuesday: Noam, Simone, Daniel, David, Gene, Elena
Justin K., Dean

Thursday: Moshe, Ron, Alex R., Alex E., Edward
Yan, Justin N., Lisa

Friday: Laurie, Janata, Lenny, Dawn, Elaine

In the conference group, the teacher first asks the questions, modelling for the group, but the students are quickly able to participate since they have had so much previous practice in questioning techniques.

Types of questions that might be asked in the conference situation are listed below.

Tell me about your writing.
What is the part that you like the best?
Does it say what you want it to say?
Who is the "we" you are talking about?
Where does your story take place?
What do you mean by.....?
I don't understand the last part about....?
How could your ideas be rearranged or changed?
Does this part make sense to you?
Is this the order you want?
Does your beginning encourage the reader to read on?
Could you add any more action to your story?
How did you feel at the end of your story?

Effective beginnings, middles, and endings to stories are discussed. The teacher asks:

Why is this an effective beginning to this story?
Why is the middle of this story so good?
How could the ending of the story be improved?

Often, the students learn to run a conference group with little teacher supervision. They become conditioned to approaching each

other for help rather than only depending on the teacher. They become more independent and mature in dealing with their own problems in storywriting, and this independence often transfers to other problem-solving situations.

In the step-by-step approach being presented, conferencing is first introduced after students have had ample opportunity to work on their first draft stories about their objects.

- One student is chosen to read his/her story in front of the class. The story does not necessarily have to be a completed one. The audience listens carefully and asks questions if the story needs clarification or explanation.

  The teacher says: "Listen carefully to Shane's story, and if you have any questions at all, put your hand up and I will stop Shane. You may then ask your question and Shane will explain."

The teacher encourages the students to share their stories with a partner to gain practice in conferencing independently. This also helps children become better able to conference in a group situation.

Revising

Children are encouraged to *revise* their stories, to go back to their seats to add answers to some of the questions asked in the sharing situation, or to change the storyline. For example, Tom wrote a story about a boy who was kidnapped by a witch and then eventually escaped. At the end of his story, someone asked, "But what hap-

pened to the witch?" Tom then went back to his story and *added* another page outlining the witch's actions when she discovered that the boy was gone.

The use of post-its (or little papers that stick over and over again) help students revise their work. When a question is asked or a suggestion made during a conference, the teacher writes on the post-it and attaches it to the child's draft story at the appropriate spot. This technique facilitates revision by reminding the student how and where to change or add to the story.

When making revisions, it is useful to demonstrate the following symbols.

∧ (used to insert words on the line above)

by plane.

He went to Florida ∧ *He....*

P.T.O. → (used to add sentences or paragraphs to the back of papers)

CHAPTER 4

Steps to Follow in Storywriting

When the students are well into the sharing and revising of their stories, the following chart on "Steps to Follow in Storywriting" is discussed and displayed.

1. Choose a topic.
2. "Talk-out" and discuss your story with a partner.
   Answer any questions.
3. Write your first draft story.
4. Share your writing — with a partner,
   with the class,
   with a conference group, or
   with your teacher.
   Answer any questions.
5. Revise your writing if you wish. Add to it or change it.
6. Store your writing in your writing folder.
7. Choose a new topic and begin again.

Students see that by sharing their stories with partners, they have just completed step 4, and when they return to their seats to add to or change their story, they are at step 5.

(The management technique discussed earlier is reinforced for steps 2 and 4. Students stand quietly, go over to a friend in the room and ask that person to listen to their ideas or finished first draft story. The two students find a spot on the floor or carpet together, away from the desk area. The teacher sees at a glance those who are sharing and those who are writing.)

When the students are finished sharing and revising their stories, they are at step 6. They store their stories in their writing folders, making sure to date each one. On a separate page they are encouraged to keep a list of the stories that they write and the date, if

completed. This list is recorded or attached to their writing folders. (See the section on "The Writing Folder," p. 5.)

When the students choose a new topic and begin again, they are at step 7. They soon realize that writing is an on-going process which is not finished with the completion of one story.

The teacher should encourage the students to repeat these steps to storywriting for several weeks or even for several months. Students will gain a good grasp of the routines and expectations involved in the "process" of writing. Moreover, they will gain self-confidence, pride in their own accomplishments, and competence in their listening and social skills.

(Note that **editing** has not occurred as of yet. Improvement in student fluency, self-expression, motivation, and self-confidence rather than improvement in the **mechanics** of writing has been the aim.)

CHAPTER 5

Choosing Topics for Storywriting

Children enjoy choosing their own topics for storywriting. They experience greater ownership and their stories relate more directly to their individual needs, interests, and experiences.

Student motivation to write usually increases dramatically when children can choose their own topics for storywriting.

However, the reality is that, on any given day, there will be some children in the class who will not have a topic for their writing. When children are encouraged to write story after story after story, they sometimes do run out of ideas. Waiting for children to choose a topic for storywriting is often a long and trying task for teachers, and most teachers will not wait many months to see results. They become impatient and frustrated at their students' apparent lack of initiative in choosing topics so they resort to their old habits of assigning topics.

In light of the above, teachers need to teach students different strategies to use in choosing topics for storywriting. In this section, activities designed to help children in choosing topics are presented and discussed. These activities include:

- Brainstorming
- Round Table Brainstorming
- Word Association Brainstorming
- Begin with a Picture
- Begin with a Story Starter or Topic Idea on a Card
- Begin with Drama
- Begin with Literature

The implementation of these practices will motivate students to write, will teach them strategies to use in choosing topics, and will better engross them in the process of writing.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a good activity designed to generate a quantity of ideas. In this case, the ideas generated become possible topics or ideas for storywriting.

[Note: Brainstorming is used in other subject areas as well.
For example: Spelling–theme lists of words
Social Studies and Science–What I know about....
Research–What I want to find out about....]

It is important that the ideas, words, or topics come from the students. The following are some guidelines to follow in brainstorming.

- Accept all ideas without passing judgement. They may be eliminated or changed later on.
- Allow enough time for a long list of ideas to be generated. The more ideas generated, the greater the chance of producing unusual or creative ideas. Creative ideas often emerge after the brainstorming seems to be dwindling off, so do not stop too soon.
- You, the teacher, should also participate to add enthusiasm and a change of direction to the brainstorming process.
- Afterwards, discuss ways that ideas can be improved upon.
- Following this, discuss ways that two or more ideas can be combined to make a third one.

After a large group brainstorming session for possible topics for storywriting, a poster is displayed somewhere in the room entitled "What Can We Write About?" Students refer to this poster when they need ideas for a topic.

What Can We Write About?

personal experiences
feelings
dreams
fantasies
trips
family
friends
pets
school
early life
television programs
movies
movie stars
puppet plays
games
sports
fairy tales
folk tales
legends
novels
character sketches
historical events
newspaper articles
news reports
something the student knows a lot about
cooking (a recipe)
hobbies
interests
supernatural
science fiction
monsters
horror stories

Students keep their own record of the topics that they want to write about on a page in their writing folders. This list is written on the part of the folder entitled "Possible Topics". It is continuously updated when children think of new ideas for storywriting.

POSSIBLE TOPICS	
My Trip to Florida	
My Dog Shelva	
My Dog Train	
Canada's Wonderland	

Encourage the students to be specific about their topics.

They should write: "My Trip to Florida" rather than "My Trip" and "My Accident at Hockey Practice" rather than "The Accident".

Round Table Brainstorming

A small group brainstorming activity which is sometimes called "Round Table Brainstorming"[1] is another effective way to generate numerous ideas for storywriting. It involves having four or five children sitting in a circle, each taking a turn at giving a response. Responses are written on a large sheet of chart paper or on a regular sized sheet of lined paper. This one paper and one pencil is passed around the circle to each student.

By using one writing tool and one piece of paper, each student is encouraged to share and participate. The students become actively involved and the teacher is free to observe, assist, and instruct individuals or small groups of students. This activity reinforces the life skills of co-operation and sharing, and also serves the specific purpose of generating numerous ideas for storywriting.

Sample Lesson — A Group Story

- Divide the class into groups of four or five.
- Discuss group dynamics with the class (the importance of working together, sharing, co-operating, and helping each other).
- Establish the rule that students must only ask the teacher a question if it is a **group question**; that is, if none of the individuals

1. This term was used by Noreen Hardwick in her Special Education Specialist Ministry course held at York University in May 1986.

in the group is able to answer the question, then a member of the group is allowed to ask the teacher the question. The teacher then assists the entire group. This practice encourages the students to work and think together, and to become more independent. It frees the teacher to work with individuals or small groups.

- Using the "Round Table Brainstorming" approach, the task is to write as many topics for storywriting as possible. The group members are encouraged to help each other with ideas.
- Each person in the group takes a turn and chooses one topic on the list. He or she then tells a story about the topic. If a student is at a loss for ideas, he or she is encouraged to say, "Please help me. I'm stuck." The other students in the group then brainstorm for possible ideas, and the storyteller continues telling the story. (This technique should first be demonstrated.)
- Orally, the group members develop a group story. The students decide upon the topic for their story co-operatively. Each person takes a turn and gives one sentence for the story. The students are encouraged to listen to each other so as to make the story events flow in logical sequence. (This technique too should first be demonstrated.)
- The group now writes this group story. Each student takes a turn and contributes one sentence at a time for the story. The one paper and one pencil is again passed on from one group member to the next to encourage full group participation.
- The story (not necessarily completed) is shared with the class. (See the section on "Conferencing", p. 25.)
- The group members are encouraged to finish the story together, and, if they decide to publish it, they are co-authors for that story.
- The students discuss and evaluate their group's ability to work together. They discuss any problems they experienced and suggest remedies and solutions for future improvement.

Word Association Brainstorming Activity

The following word association brainstorming activity is a pre-writing activity designed to generate ideas for storywriting. This activity also serves to generate the specific vocabulary that might be used in the writing of a story.

Teacher Demonstration

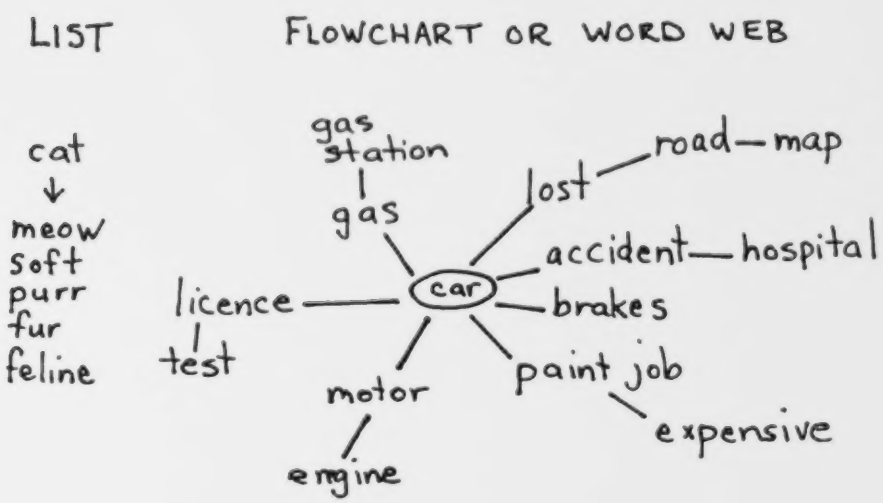
- The teacher introduces this activity by presenting a list of words to the students one at a time and then asking them to write the first word or idea that comes into their heads.

Example: cat/dog
newspaper/news
car/accident
red/blue
floor/wash

It is emphasized that few people make the same associations. There is no one right answer.

- In the next step, the teacher chooses one word as the topic word to explore, and in a whole-class brainstorming session, a list, or flowchart, or word web is produced. The teacher writes the word in the middle of the page or chart paper, and writes around it words, phrases, ideas, and feelings, all related in some way to the main idea.

Examples:



Independent Practice

- The students work in pairs or in groups creating their own word association word webs or lists of words. They then use the words that they co-operatively develop to **tell** a story and then to **write** a story.

  (The teacher should be aware here that if the students have the vocabulary in front of them all spelled conventionally, they may become over-cautious about spelling. Students should thus be encouraged to use "inventive" spelling for this activity as well.

- Topic ideas for brainstorming may be left at a centre for students to refer to when they need a topic for storywriting (step 1 or 7). Students go to the centre, choose a topic card, and, with a partner, go through the process of brainstorming for words and creating a word web, brainstorming for ideas for storywriting using the words, telling a story, and then writing it.

Begin with a Picture

A picture is a concrete aid in visualizing and in initiating a storyline. The following activity provides this concrete aid, and also teaches children a strategy to use in **choosing a topic** for storywriting.

This interactive technique, developed by Noreen Hardwick (former Special Education consultant and currently Co-ordinator of Language for the Toronto Board of Education), has been described by her as having "tremendous potential for teaching."[2] Not only does it give students a concrete focus when writing, but it also gives them help when they do not have a topic to write about. They use this lesson as a model to follow for developing their subsequent stories.

This activity also reinforces the management technique discussed in the section "One Way to Begin." When sharing ideas and stories, students, in pairs, are encouraged to find a spot somewhere in the room, on the floor or carpet area. The teacher sees immediately those who are sharing and those who are writing silently in their seats. Children gain needed practice in working together and in conferencing.

Sample Lesson

- The students are presented with three words:

  river, mountain, boat

  (These words could be representative of a theme or unit about to be studied. For example: *moon, rocket, astronaut*)
- They are asked to draw a picture of these three objects as fast as they can using a *pencil.* At the same time, they are encouraged to be thinking of a story about the picture. Detailed pictures, not neatness, are encouraged. In effect, the students are *drawing* their stories.
- One student is asked to share his/her picture and story with the whole class or group.
- The students are then paired up, and using their pictures, they share their stories with their partners.
- They are asked to draw again, but this time, they use a different colored writing tool. They are encouraged not to color their pictures in with the colored crayon or marker, but to **add to** their pictures. This different color highlights the details added and the storyline is seen developing.
- Again they share their stories.
- The students add to their pictures a third time, but they now use

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2. Noreen Hardwick, Special Education Specialist Ministry Course, York University, May 1986.

a third color. The drawing of other objects, animals, people, and/or minute details important to the storyline are encouraged.

(Drawing with the three different colors indicates to the teacher and to the students the amount of work and ideas that have been added as a result of discussion and interaction. Often, the development of the storyline is clearly seen.)

- The students are once again asked to share their pictures and their accompanying stories. This time, the listening audience is encouraged to ask questions and to make comments and/or suggestions. (Waiting until the third telling of the story usually allows the student authors enough time to formulate their own thoughts. By this time, the student authors know what they want to say and are able to clarify the story when questioned.)
- The students now write their first draft stories.

  "Using your picture, write the best story you can."

  Writing usually begins without hesitation. The picture serves as a visual aid and the discussion and sharing beforehand help to clarify the storyline.

  (These stories are shared and stored in the students' writing folders as first draft writing, or they may be worked on, revised, edited, and proofread for final publication into book form.)

  The steps to follow might be posted for the students to refer to.

- Draw (in pencil).
- Share.
- Draw (in red).
- Share.
- Draw (in green).
- Share and answer questions.
- Write!

For this lesson, by giving the students the three specific objects to draw, the teacher is, in fact, giving the students the topic to write about. This is not a problem here since students who are involved in choosing their own topics on a regular and daily basis are usually better able to write when the topics are given. In this case, by drawing and discussing, and continuing to do so, the students contemplate and plan and ultimately make the topic their own. Thus, this is a valuable technique, which allows for positive peer interaction as well as the development of ideas and strategies for storywriting.

Used at intervals during the year, this technique is an effective evaluative measure to illustrate to the teacher just how much the students have improved in fluency and skills. (The "Teacher Evaluation" sections might prove helpful here in assessing student writing.)

One Way to Begin for Primary Classes

This activity is an effective **way to begin** for primary classes. It is common for primary grade students to draw and talk about their pictures. They should be encouraged to draw many pictures and to

develop many storylines. The first few steps (Draw. Share. Draw. Share.) should be repeated many times before the actual writing of the stories.

It is a good idea to ask young children to draw themselves in their pictures.

For example, *"Draw a picture of yourself, a snowman, and a house."*

Before they begin to draw, the teacher might ask:

"Where are **you** *going to be in your picture?"*
(in the house, outside near the snowman, at the front door of the house going inside)

"What will you be doing?"
(making the snowman, throwing snowballs at the snowman, in the house warming up)

"What is going to happen next?"

Ideas for objects to draw can be elicited from the children and recorded on a chart or board, or students can bring in actual objects and leave them on an idea table for students to choose from.

Begin with a Story Starter or Topic Idea on a Card

Storywriting ideas written on cards are useful in helping children to choose topics for storywriting. The cards are prepared by the teacher, but the students do have a certain amount of choice for they are choosing one topic from a host of topics. Students may also help to make up and write the topic ideas on the cards.

This activity is useful in providing students with topics to write about. It also helps to teach children strategies to use when the topic is assigned. The first step is to introduce the students to the bin (or envelope or bulletin board) containing the storywriting ideas. These topic ideas revolve around a theme or may be general storywriting ideas.

Teacher Demonstration

- Choose a card.
- Read the card.
- Discuss with a partner or with the group what the card is saying; that is, clarify the meaning.
- **Brainstorm** possibilities for storylines about the topic.
- **Tell** a story, one sentence at a time, each group member taking a turn. (Keep in mind good beginnings, middles, and endings to storylines.)
- Write the story. Each member of the group writes his/her own story or the members work together on a group story.
- Continue the "Steps to Follow in Storywriting" as with other stories written.

Begin with Drama

Having students role play or dramatize the situation or story is an excellent impetus for writing. Through drama or through the use of puppets, students act out ideas or parts of their story. The ideas become *real* for them. They are able to *see* their stories and they become better able to write.

Begin with Literature

Daily Read-Aloud Experiences

Reading aloud daily to children exposes them to many different forms of literature and nurtures a love and enthusiasm for literature and for books. Literature serves as a model or stimulus for students' writing. Students borrow a style of writing or even borrow characters and partial plots from stories that they have enjoyed.

To help instil this love for literature, parents should be encouraged to read aloud regularly with their children, beginning at a very early age. By doing this, they are setting the groundwork for reading and for writing. As children listen to stories and follow along, they become familiar with the syntax of written language, a prerequisite to reading and to writing. As well, positive attitudes towards reading and literature are formed. Children associate reading with pleasant memories of closeness; later they view reading as an enjoyable and worthwhile activity.

The following poem entitled "Read Me a Story" symbolizes this message.

Read Me a Story

He sat there in the comfortable
armchair
Snuggled close and warm
His mother read
The words with care
With love.

And he listened
Wide-eyed and bright
Open-mouthed
Following along
With his finger
With his eyes
Laughing every now and again
Then perplexed
And anxiously awaiting
Caught up in the action
Of the plot
Of the characters
Caught up in the mood
Of the author's words
Of his mother's voice.

And then the book closed
And he was happy
But not satiated
For he wanted more
And more and more.

And now that he is grown
He reads
The words himself
Yet he still remembers
And enjoys.

Susan Schwartz

The Read-Aloud Handbook written by Jim Trelease is an excellent resource to use and to recommend to parents. It includes easy to read information about the value of regular reading aloud to children, as well as a detailed guide to more than three hundred read-aloud books.

Before any read-aloud session, teachers benefit from rehearsing the reading of the story. Bob Barton, eminent storyteller and founder of the Storytellers' School of Toronto, says:

> "When reading aloud, the task is so much more than speaking print. Knowing when to turn the page of a picture book in order to build suspense or keep pace with the flow of the text can make an enormous difference. And even the best story can benefit from a little pruning in a read aloud situation.... Practising the story out loud will also help reveal the qualities of sound and rhythm it possesses and give some indication of the places to pause in a way that the eye can't detect. At the same time the vocal treatment to be used can be considered. Should delivery be matter-of-fact? Would some voice characterization add more life?"[3]

During read-aloud sessions, teachers should point out and discuss the various types of print, illustrations, and formats evident in the books read. (See the section on "Format of Books," p. 70) With experience and examination of many books, student observation skills regarding how books are made will improve, and children will be better able to use more variety and creativity when producing their own finished books.

Read-aloud sessions readily lend themselves to developing the concept of audience. Questions to ask after a read-aloud session are:

> "Who do you think this story is aimed at?"
> "Who might most enjoy reading this story?"
> "What might need to be changed in this story in order to have it aimed at a different audience?"

When children share their own writing, they ask similar questions about audience. They learn to set appropriate goals and become more analytical about their own stories and about others already in print.

Discussion of the basic elements of a story — the characters, the plot, and the setting — is effective during read-aloud sessions. Every narrative story contains a problem which is usually solved by the main characters(s). When the problem in the story is analysed, the plot is seen to evolve as the main characters do something (the action) to overcome one or more of the obstacles. Identifying the "who," "what," "where," "when," "why," and "how" in the story

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3. See Bob Barton, *Tell Me Another* (Markham, Ont.: Pembroke Publishers Ltd., 1986), p. 76.

helps to isolate the main events in the story, and often determines the characters, the plot, and the setting.

The Art of Storytelling

The telling of a story is often more effective than the reading of a story. An audience becomes entranced by a good storyteller's facial expressions, animated gestures, intonations, and expressive language. When listening to a story, the mechanical difficulties of reading are put aside, the imagination is encouraged, and the audience is made to visualize the pictures.

After telling a story to a class, show the book that the story is based on to the students. It is interesting to note the students' reactions to the illustrations in the book. Comments like: "Oh, look at his father. I didn't expect him to look like that," or "It's not like anything I imagined. In my mind, I saw the monster as much bigger and meaner looking."

Teachers should learn to tell some of their favorite stories by memory and then encourage their students to practise this art of storytelling.

The question to be asked here is: Just how does one become a good storyteller? Bob Barton's book *Tell Me Another* is filled with good advice on how to become a storyteller. It also contains countless titles of stories to choose from as well as samples of stories to use to become proficient. He states, "We are all natural storytellers."[4] It is not a difficult task then to become a storyteller for we all have stories about our childhood that we remember, interesting experiences that we daily talk about, and favorite stories that we have heard or read that we could tell.

Organizing a group or class project of storytelling is a good means by which to develop proficient storytellers. In this project, groups of students work together to tell different stories to the class. A group might contain three students working together on one story. One student in the group tells the beginning of the story, another student tells the middle, and a third student tells the ending. These three students each need a copy of the story that they are working on. They need to practise and rehearse their parts for possible presentation. The story need not be memorized word for word, but certain words and phrases should be remembered so as to maintain the sound and rhythm of the story.

A storytelling festival or storytelling week might be held as a culminating activity. The festival might feature stories from a particular country, or stories centred around a theme or subject. Groups of students might decide to present their stories to different classes or to a large audience in the gym. Parents might also be invited.

A visit from a professional storyteller during this storytelling week adds excitement to the program and gives students a good role model to aid them as storytellers.

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4. See *Tell Me Another*, p. 10.

Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading or Drop Everything and Read

The more students read, the better writers they become. Reading provides greater opportunities to become familiar with the different types of illustrations and print formats used in books. It stimulates ideas or possible topics for storywriting. It enables students to notice descriptive words and passages and the many types of writing mechanics. Often, children transfer what they learn from their reading to their written attempts.

In one instance, when I asked Kevin how he had learned to use brackets so effectively in his writing, he answered, "When I read books, I notice the way it is done." Children do notice things in books, and become more and more proficient with experience. Teacher input often facilitates this process.

It is a good idea to allow time each day for students to read material of their own choice in a regular program of Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (U.S.S.R.) or Drop Everything and Read (D.E.A.R.). This program establishes and nurtures the habit of sustained attention to a self-selected book; it also allows children to pursue books at their leisure. It is most effective when held at the same time each day. The children come to expect this period as a permanent part of their routine. If the teacher reads during this time, the routine is reinforced and reading is seen as a valued activity.

Patterning and Pattern Books

Patterning Word Structure

Pattern books contain words, word structures, or events which recur again and again. They may have a cumulative pattern in which new details or events are added on and then repeated for each episode.

Books or poems with an obvious pattern are effectively used as models for children's writing. The familiarity of a literary pattern gives even the most reluctant writer the confidence to make an attempt at writing. Once the pattern is enjoyed and internalized, the students easily create their own versions by extending the pattern and using their own ideas and experiences. By exposure to many different patterns in literature, students begin to see that everything in life has some kind of interconnective relationship, that pattern exists everywhere. The following poem illustrates this idea.

A pattern is....

A pattern is . . . leaves on a stem,
a butterfly's wings,
a crystal garden,
the song a bird sings. (Science)

A pattern is . . . months of the year,
counting by twos,
symmetrical design,
graphing our shoes. (Mathematics)

A pattern is . . . singing a song,
trying to hum,
clapping the beat,
rhythm on a drum. (Music)

A pattern is . . . hop, skip and jump,
routine on a mat,
an obstacle course,
dancing Alley Cat. (Physical Education)

A pattern is . . . a white picket fence,
knowing your school,
your family and mine,
following a rule. (Social Studies)

A pattern is . . . rhythm of the words,
structure of the line,
chanting together,
predicting the rhyme. (Language)

A pattern is . . . lines with a brush,
weaving with jute,
repeating a shape,
prints with a boot. (Art)

There is a PATTERN. . .
in science,
in mathematics,
in music,
in physical education,
in social studies,
in language,
in art.

A PATTERN makes sense of the world.

by Mindy Pollishuke, North York Board of Education
Elizabeth Hartman, North York Board of Education
Cindy Goodman, Bialik Hebrew Day School

Co-operative Class Books

Patterning is effectively used in producing co-operative class books. Each child in the class or in the group produces one page adhering to the particular pattern in a book that has been read. All of these written attempts are collated together into one book.

Co-operative class books serve as models for students' individual writing and are also a quick way to publish students' work. The procedure of publishing is demonstrated for the whole class, and the students see how a book is put together. This book is added to the class library, complete with borrower's card and book pocket envelope. A valuable means of promoting positive communication with parents is to send the book home with each child. Parents are encouraged to sign the *Comments* page, which is added for this purpose.

The following is a sample of a child's writing based on the well-known poem "Alligator Pie" by Dennis Lee (published in Toronto by Macmillan of Canada, 1974). All of the completed samples in the class can be collated together to make a co-operative class book.

Other books suitable for patterning are listed below.

Asch, Frank. *I Can Blink.* Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1985.

Ashford, Ann. *IF I FOUND A WISTFUL UNICORN-A GIFT OF LOVE.* Atlanta, Georgia: Peachtree Publications Inc., 1978.

Ahlberg, Janet and Allan. *Each Peach Pear Plum.* London, England: Fontana Picture Lions, 1978.

Brown, Margaret Wise. *The Important Book.* New York: Harper and Row, 1949.

Brown, Mike. *Wouldn't it be FUNNY if. . . . .* Worthington, Ohio: Willowisp Press, 1985.

Burmingham, John. *Would you rather. . . .* London, England: Fontana Picture Lions, 1984.

Charlip, Remy. *Fortunately.* Don Mills, Ontario: Collier Macmillan, 1985.

Delacorte, Peter, and Witte, Michael. *The Book of Terns.* Markham, Ontario: Penguin Books, 1978.

Elting, Mary, and Folsam, Michael. *Q is for Duck An Alphabet Guessing Game.* New York: Clarion Books, 1980.

Galloway, Priscilla. *Good Times, Bad Times, Mummy and Me.* Toronto: Women's Press, 1980.

Handy, Libby. *Boss for a Week.* Richmond Hill, Ontario: Scholastics, 1982.

Hazbry, Nancy, and Condy, Roy. *How to get Rid of BAD DREAMS.* Richmond Hill, Ontario: Scholastics-TAB Publications Ltd., 1983.

Hoberman, Mary Ann. *A House Is a House for Me.* Markham, Ontario: Penguin Books of Canada Ltd., 1982.

Martin Jr., Bill. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see?* Toronto: Holt Rinehart and Winston of Canada Ltd., 1982.

Martin Jr., Bill. *FIRE! FIRE! said Mrs. McGuire.* Toronto: Holt Rinehart and Winston of Canada Ltd., 1982.

Martin Jr., Bill. *Monday Monday, I Like Monday.* Toronto: Holt Rinehart and Winston of Canada Ltd., 1983.

Mayer, Mercer. *If I had. . . .* New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1977.

Mayer, Mercer. *Me Too!* New York: Western Publishing Co. Ind., 1975.

Mayer, Mercer. *Just for You.* New York: Western Publishing Co. Inc., 1975.

Morris, William Barrett. *THE LONGEST JOURNEY IN THE WORLD.* Toronto: Holt Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1982.

Obligardo, Lilian. *Faint Frogs Feeling Feverish and other terrifically tantalizing tongue twisters.* Markham, Ontario: Penguin Books, 1986.

Pienkowski, Jan. *Dinner Time.* Colombia, Los Angeles: Gallery Five Ltd., 1984.

Pittman, Al, and Hall, Pam. *Down by Jim Long's Stage.* Newfoundland: Breakwater Books, 1976.

Popadic, Slavica. *I Don't Mind Being Short.* Windsor, Ontario: Black Moss Press, 1986.

Silverstein, Shel. *Ations* (a poem in *A Light in the Attic).* New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1981.

Stinson, Kathy. *Those Green Things.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1985.

Stinson, Kathy. *Red is Best.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1984.

Stinson, Kathy. *Big and Little.* Toronto: Annick Press, 1985. (A class book *Important and Insignificant* can be produced.)

Viorst, Judith. *If I were in charge of the world.* New York: Macmillan, 1984.

Viorst, Judith. *My mama says there aren't any Zombies, Ghosts . . . .* New York: Macmillan, 1977.

Viorst, Judith. *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day.* New York: Macmillan, 1976.

Zemach, Margot. *It Could Always Be Worse.* Richmond Hill, Ontario: Scholastics, 1986.

Zolotov, Charlotte. *Some Things Go Together.* New York: Thomas Crowell Junior Books, 1983.

Zolotov, Charlotte. *Someday.* New York: Harper Junior Books, 1965.

Zolotov, Charlotte. *The Hating Book.* New York: Harper Junior Books, 1969.

Zolotov, Charlotte. *Summer is. . . .* New York: Thomas Crowell Junior Books, 1983.

Zolotov, Charlotte. *Do you know what I'll do.* New York: Harper Junior Books, 1958.

Zolotov, Charlotte. *If it weren't for you.* New York: Harper Junior Books, 1956.

Patterning Storylines

Favorite stories are often patterned. Students enjoy retelling and rewriting these stories. They should be encouraged to make changes in storyline or character so as to make the stories their own. Well-loved fairy tales are commonly retold with an unusual twist in storyline or character, or often children and adults enjoy making up their own creative fairy tale. The following books can be used as resources in patterning favorite storylines.

Terry Jones, *Fairy Tales* (London, England: Schocken Books, 1982).
(Examples of student books are *BARKIN AND GRETTEL*, and *FRACTURED FAIRY TALES*)

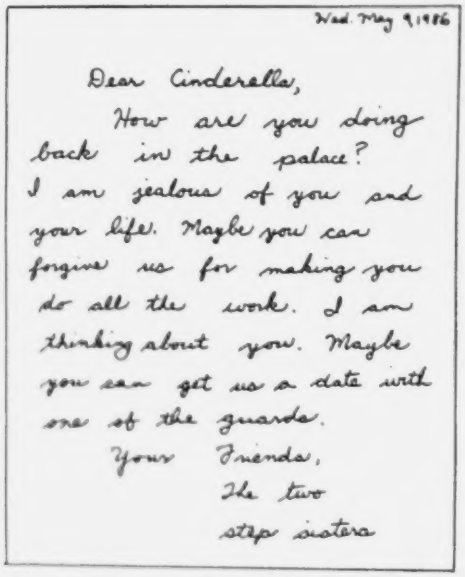
James Marshal, *Miss NELSON is MiSSiNG* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977).
(An example of a student book is *MRS. POLLISHUKE IS MISSING*)

Norman Bridwell, *Clifford Storybooks* (Richmond Hill, Ontario: Scholastics Inc., 1966).
(An example of a student book is *Clifford Goes to the Cottage.)*

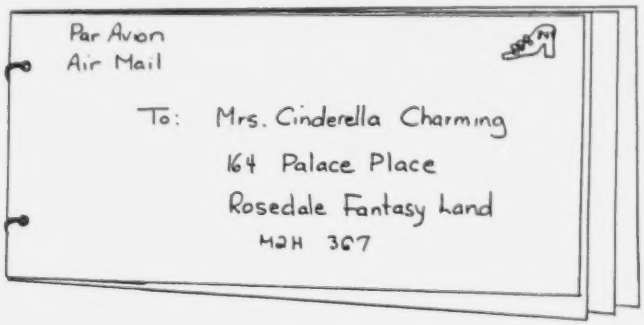
Patterning Book Formats

Unusual and innovative books are good books to pattern. In these cases, the format of the book is patterned, not necessarily the words, the word structure, or the storyline. As with all patterns, the students require ample time to read and examine these books before attempting to copy the pattern. The following books are excellent to use as models for co-operative class books or for individual students' writing. Directions for making each one are given after each illustrated sample.

A Book of Letters

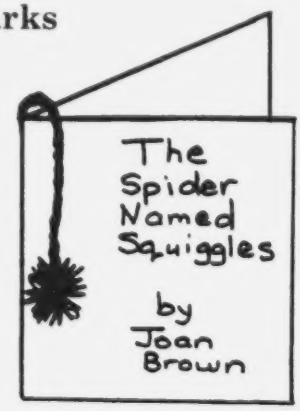

Wed. May 9, 1986
Dear Cinderella,
How are you doing back in the palace? I am jealous of you and your life. Maybe you can forgive us for making you do all the work. I am thinking about you. Maybe you can get us a date with one of the guards.
Your Friends,
The two
step sisters

- The teacher or students read the book *The Jolly Postman* by Janet and Allan Ahlberg (London: Heinemann, 1986).
- Students are taught letter writing skills.
- They write a letter to one of the fairy tale characters. They address their envelope. They put their letter into their envelope.
- All the envelopes, as well as front and back cover, are attached, using string or a ring.



Books with Bookmarks

- This book is sewn together with a long length of thick thread or wool.
- The book is stitched up once (starting the first stitch at the top) and then reinforced by stitching back along the fold line. The wool comes up from the top and hangs free, forming the bookmark.
- Tassels or pompoms complete with googly eyes and other features might be added to the end of the wool.



Books with Photographs

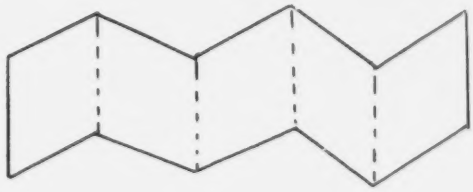
- Instead of drawing their own pictures for their stories or books, students use photographs. This idea is especially effective after a child returns from a trip with photos of his/her experiences.

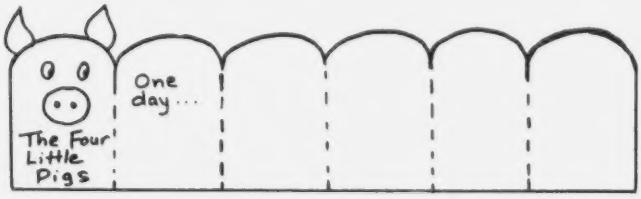
Wordless Picture Book with Accompanying Story on Tape

- For reluctant writers, stories are spoken into a tape recorder and saved on cassette tapes.
- Pictures are drawn to accompany the story.
- These pictures are made into a book and can be stored in a see-through bag together with the tape.

Accordion Books

- Long pieces of construction paper or bristol board are folded into an even number of segments.

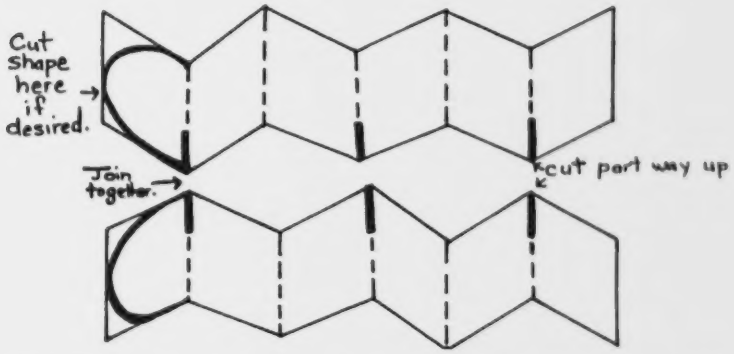




Fabric Books

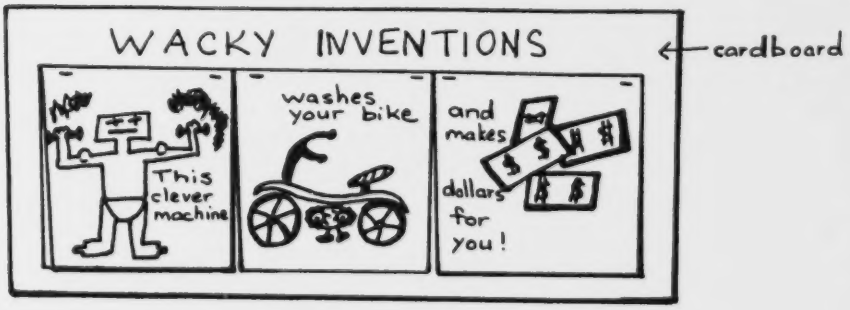
- Fabric books are similar to accordion books but are made out of fabric.
- A long piece of fabric is folded in zigzag folds and ironed. Each fold is one page.
- Print and illustrations are stitched or glued on, or waterproof markers are used.
- Fabric books may be stitched along one side when finished.

Double Accordion Books



- *Two* long pieces of construction paper or bristol board are folded into an even number of segments.
- Cuts are made part way up on every second fold. These cut lines are then intersected to connect both accordion halves together.
- This book makes an exciting animal or monster story.
- This double accordion book is based on *The Green-eyed Monster* by Paul Adams, published by Child's Play (International) Ltd., Holland, 1985.

Flip Books



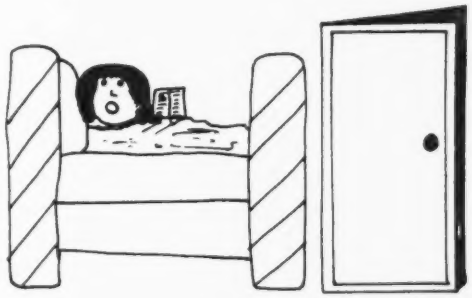
- Long pieces of paper are cut for the pages of the book.
- These papers are folded into thirds — all the same size.

- A picture is drawn in three parts. Words are written to accompany the theme.
- For support, the book is stapled in the three parts onto a larger piece of cardboard.
- Each flap is easily lifted.

Flap Books

- The flaps need to be fairly strong and are made from construction paper or bristol board. Simple flaps are made from circles, squares, or other shapes drawn to look like doors, windows, treasure chests, suitcases, and so on.
- The shape and size desired is cut out.
- A picture is drawn on the shape and under it.
- An edge is folded and glued onto the appropriate spot on the page.
- When this flap is lifted, pictures, words, sentences, or paragraphs are revealed underneath.

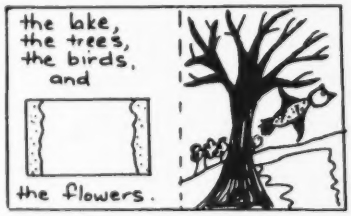
I was in my bedroom reading my favorite story when I heard a strange sound coming from my closet. I was scared. Should I open the door?



Peek-a-Boo Books

- Peek-a-boo books are made out of cardboard or construction paper folded in half.
- Windows are cut out of the front page and covered with wax paper, clear plastic, or cellophane, if desired.
- A picture is drawn on the following page completely filling the page. When the paper is folded in half again, only a small portion of the picture is seen. The idea is to peek through the window to

Front



Inside

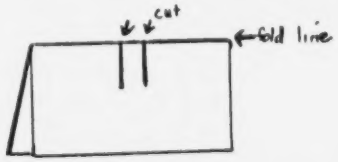
see what is inside or outside of the window. The paper is then opened or turned to reveal the entire picture and the continuation of the story.

- Pages can be stapled or sewn together to make a book.

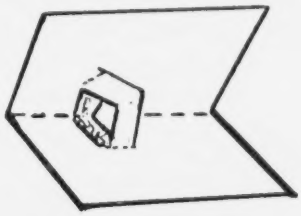
Pop-Out Books

In this book an object or picture pops out from each page. Picture-making skills such as centre of interest, horizon line, and background perspective are effectively taught at this time.

- One piece of any size blank paper is folded in half and two lines (2 to 8 cm in length) are cut on the fold line side, as in the diagram below.



(The longer this line is cut, the smaller the picture must be. If the line is cut too long, then a medium-size picture will prove too big for the book and will jut out from the page.) This paper is then opened up, folded backwards along the same fold line, and the strip that was formed when the two lines were cut is pulled out.



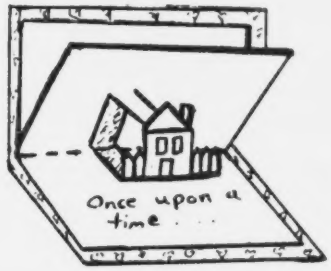
- An object or picture is drawn (painted, cut, or pasted, etc.) on another piece of paper and cut out and glued onto this strip jutting out from the middle of the page.

[Note: Plan your picture carefully and test it for size before gluing. Be careful that it does not jut out from the page.]

- The first step is repeated with another piece of paper the same size as the first. A different object is drawn, cut out, and glued onto the strip or tab formed when cutting two lines. These two pages are glued together to make the first two pages of the book.

Further pages are added in a similar fashion, each page with one (or more) pop-out tabs and pictures glued on.

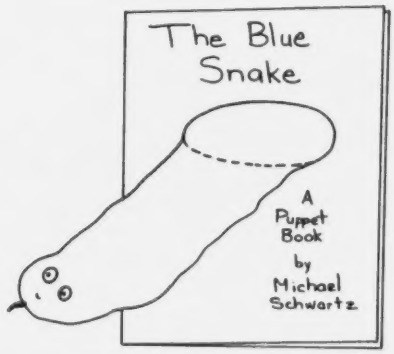
- When the desired number of pages are glued together, another white paper is attached and glued to each end in preparation for attaching the book to its cover.



(If preferred, only one paper may be glued on both front and back of the book to be used as the cover of the book.)

Puppet Books

- Puppet books have a hole cut on each page of the book (including the front and back cover).
- An old sock is used for the puppet.
- The sock puppet is attached to the second last page of the book and the ends are hidden by gluing the second last page to the last page (the cover).



- The fingers are placed into the puppet from the back of the book and the puppet is moved as each page is read.
- Puppet books are based on *Owliver The Actor Takes a Bow* by Robert Kraus, published by Windmill Books, Inc., and Simon and Schuster, 1981.

Books with Characters "On the Move"

- The main characters are drawn on cardboard and attached by string to the front cover of the book. They travel from page to page.
- In this example, a reporter and the cameraman are on the scene. (This particular activity is effective during a newspaper study.)

- Books with main characters on strings are based on *Busy Bears* by Peter Seymour, from Child's Play International Ltd., UK Edition, 1982.

The Car Crash

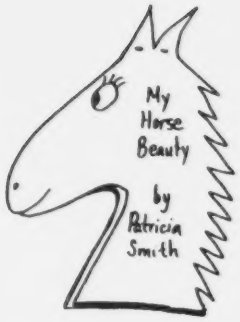
On April 5th 1987, two mn were driv ing on Steeles and crashed The Ambulance came and took them away Their families were Sad The mens names were Jack and Joe Joe was 22 years old Jack was 21 years old

Biographies

- After students read and do research about a particular person, they may decide to write a biography.
- Biographies may include:
  Table of Contents;
  Bibliography;
  Footnotes.

Shape Books

- Shape books usually centre around a theme or idea.
- Students trace a shape and cut out the number of pages they need.
- All pages in the shape book are the same size and the same shape.
- The cover is cut a little bit larger than the inside pages.
- Pages are stapled, sewn, or tied together with string.



Home-Made Filmstrips

acetate
clear tape
She had 8 sisters and brothers.
Her father owns a sugar refinery which makes white sugar.
In 1927, 6 year old Elizabeth wanted to be a doctor. In those days girls were not given an education.

- Stories are written and pictures are drawn onto acetate pages. Colorful non-smear overhead projector markers are used.
- The acetate pages are attached using clear tape.
- To view this home-made filmstrip, one page at a time is placed on an overhead projector and viewed on the screen.
- A tape recording, complete with sound effects and/or music, can be made to accompany the story.

"Choose Your Own Adventure" Books

These books are easily patterned. They are uniquely written with the reader "YOU" as the main character who makes all the decisions in the story. The beginning of the story usually introduces the main character, the setting, and the circumstances of the story. The reader must make the decisions and then turn to the pages indicated to see what will happen next. Once an ending to the story is reached, the reader returns to the beginning again and chooses another path which leads to a new adventure and a different ending.

The following is a sample of one page of a book written by Armeen (grade 3) and Rachel (grade 4) based on the *Choose Your Own Adventure* books by Bantam-Skylark Books or on *Pick-a-Path* books by Scholastics.

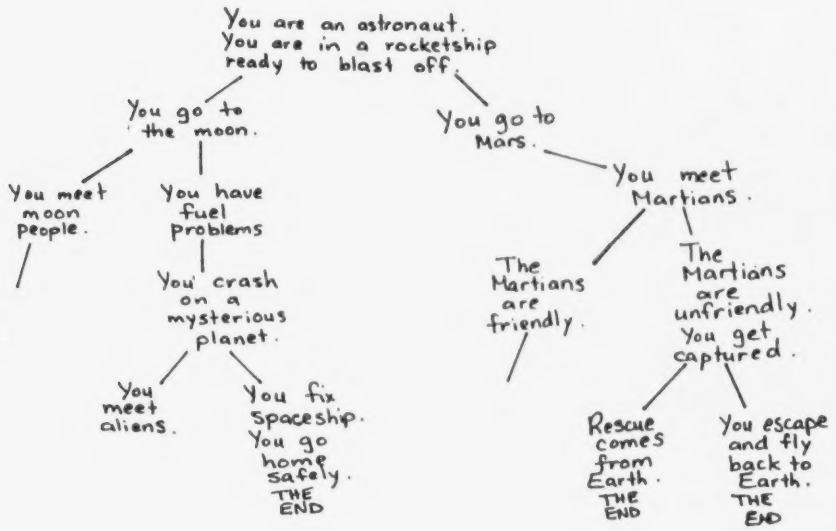
You are curious. You go closer and closer to the bright little thing. Suddenly you freeze. You thought you heard, "Hamma! Hamma! Giant here!" And you see two little unicorns peeking out of the tree. "Hamma! Come here! Giant going to eat up me."

They're so cute. "What are your names?" you ask. "Me, Harnie. Me, Rena." say the unicorns. They then run away. Suddenly you see a bigger unicorn. "Hello! What is your name?" said the unicorn. "My name is Crystal." you say. "What is your name?" It says, "My name is Unique. Would you like to come for a cup of tea?"

If you decide to go home, turn to page 12.

If you decide to go for a cup of tea, turn to page 9.

When writing this type of story, it is a good idea for the students to plan their storylines using a flow chart.


You are an astronaut. You are in a rocketship ready to blast off.
You go to the moon.
You go to Mars.
You meet moon people.
You have fuel problems
You meet Martians.
You crash on a mysterious planet.
The Martians are friendly.
The Martians are unfriendly. You get captured.
You meet aliens.
You fix spaceship. You go home safely. THE END
Rescue comes from Earth. THE END
You escape and fly back to Earth. THE END

Once the flow chart is complete, the pages are counted (each situation is usually one page in the book). Page numbers are assigned at random to each situation. This numbering enables the story events to flow in the proper sequence. Ultimately, the student will write several stories originating from the same beginning.

A student worksheet evaluating this type of book is found in the Student Worksheets section and is useful as a checklist for both student and teachers' evaluation.

CHAPTER 6

Developing a Sense of Authorship

Student Authors

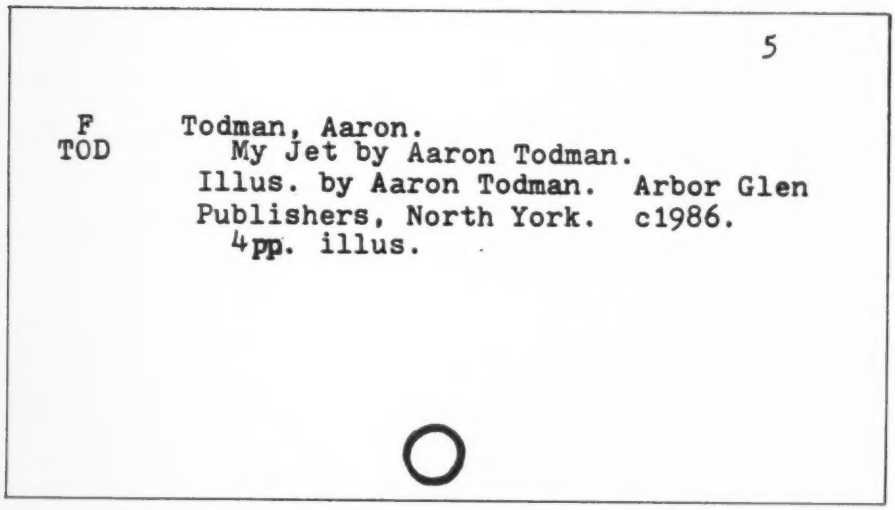
The sharing of published books is an important part of the writing process. Once the students have published a book, they become an author and a person of some esteem. Their published books are placed on the bookshelves in the classroom along with the published works of professional authors.

In some schools, the books are loaned or donated to the school library. Students usually do not mind keeping their books in the library, for they know that they are free to sign their books out and they feel a sense of importance knowing that other people will be reading their writing.

Eight-year-old Aaron illustrated this point when he said, "I can hardly wait until my sister is in kindergarden so that she can sign out my book." When asked, "How old is your sister?" he replied, "She's eight months old."

Another example illustrates this sense of authorship. Mark, a grade 5 student, asked me, "When will my book be going into the library?" I answered, "Just as soon as you are finished." He heaved a great sigh of relief and said, "Great. I can hardly wait to sign it out."

Creative librarians help to make student authorship more meaningful. A section of the library devoted to students' published works may be set up. Call numbers and accession numbers are put on these student books. A card catalogue file may be established, which is a listing, on individual cards, of the student authors' names and the titles of the books written.


5

F
TOD Todman, Aaron.
My Jet by Aaron Todman.
Illus. by Aaron Todman. Arbor Glen
Publishers, North York. c1986.
4pp. illus.

The process of setting up the card catalogue file is shared with the students. The students are taught to put call numbers on the spines or front covers of their books, and they help to file the cards and books into alphabetical order. With these activities, they learn valuable library skills in practical situations. Greater understanding of library practices adds to their motivation and confidence in using the library and its resources.

The Author's Chair

To emphasize further the sense of authorship, a chair in the classroom and/or in the library is designated as the "Author's Chair."[5] Students sit in this chair and are honored as they read their books to others. Students are encouraged to read their books to their classmates or to small or large groups in other classes. Ar-

5. See D. Graves and J. Hansen, "The Author's Chair," *Language Arts*, vol. 60, no. 2 (February 1983), pp. 176-83.

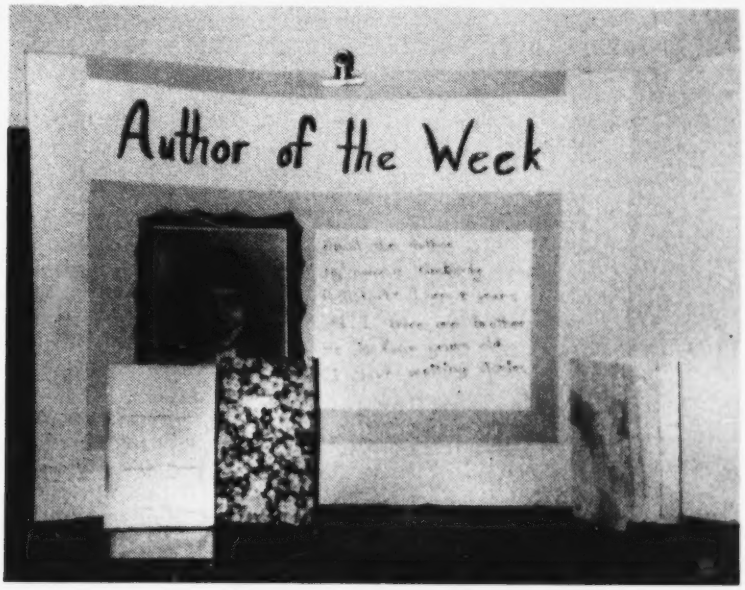
rangements are often made to have students read to other classes, sometimes at a set time each day and for a particular length of time. The students in the school welcome this student author reading time. They too become motivated to write and the student authors gain a great sense of "audience" and "authorship."

Author of the Month

Author of the Month features a commercially published author. His/her books are displayed along with a photo and biographical information. Reading, writing, and art activities centring around the books often challenge the students to read and discuss the author's work.

Author of the Week

Author of the Week features a student author. The student's published work is displayed along with a photo and relevant information written about the author. This adds to the sense of authorship and feeling of self-esteem.



Celebrating Student Authors

An excellent idea to increase student motivation to write and to read is to have children do book reviews of students' published books.

The book reviews on page 60 have been printed on the Apple computer using the program "The Newsroom".

Meeting Authors in Person

Meeting authors in person, either going to private bookstores when they are there or inviting them to visit your classroom or school, are excellent experiences to illustrate to your students that authors are real people just like themselves. It makes the students feel that being an author is not an impossible dream. It also motivates children to read with more interest, for they become more empathetic to the author's feelings and ideas after they have met and spoken to him or her.

Arranging for an author to come to the school requires some preparation and often necessitates funding. Writers' organizations, such as CANSCAIP in Canada, may be contacted to find out authors, illustrators, and performers available for readings, art

BOOK
REVIEWS
A review of "Barkin and Gretel"
The story of "Barkin and Gretel" by Mi - Kyung Chung is a wonderful story about a mean mother who forces her husband, the father, to get rid of their children. So one day the parents took their kids into the woods. The two kids went in the deepest part of the forest. When the kids were not looking the two parents left them and went back home. They didn't know what to do. Then, they saw a gingerbread house. The two kids decided to eat some of the gingerbread house. They ate and ate and ate. Suddenly, a lady that was really the witch, came out. Later on in the story the witch captured the kids. Read the book and find out what happens ! ! ! !
By: Elaine Hsu
THE STORY "MYSTERY OF THE MERMAID" BY MI - KYUNG CHUNG IS AN EXCITING STORY. IT IS ALL ABOUT SOME MERMAIDS WHO FOLLOW ANOTHER MERMAID FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE OCEAN WHERE THE TERRIBLE SHARK LIVES. SHE LED THEM TO THE STRANGEST PLACE OF THE OCEAN AND NEVER CAME BACK.
READ THE STORY. IT'S VERY EXCITING.
BY: NANCY KEI
The story "Toy Town" is a cute story by Holly Jane McCutcheon. It's all about Holly and her doll. One day her doll came alive and told her that she married her Ken doll. She had her piggy bank as a baby. Her pictures are wonderful, stories are long, also the author page is wonderful because of the picture of herself. Read the book. It's really good ! By: Nancy Kei
BY
ARMEEN BHESANIA
THE STORY "THE LUCKY COIN" IS A GREAT STORY ABOUT A GROUP WHO IS GOING ON A TREASURE HUNT, AND FINDS A LUCKY COIN THAT GIVES YOU WISHES WHEN YOU RUB THE COIN THICE. GREAT PIC - TURES WONDERFUL STORY.
READ THE STORY!
"My New Bird" is a story by Jenny Chong. It's all about Jenny. She wishes she can buy a bird but her mother won't buy a bird for her. One day her wish came true.
Read the story and find out. By: Nancy Kei

displays, storytelling, puppetry workshops, mime, drama, cartooning, and musical presentations.

Once you have arranged for your students to meet with an author, you will enhance the experience by:

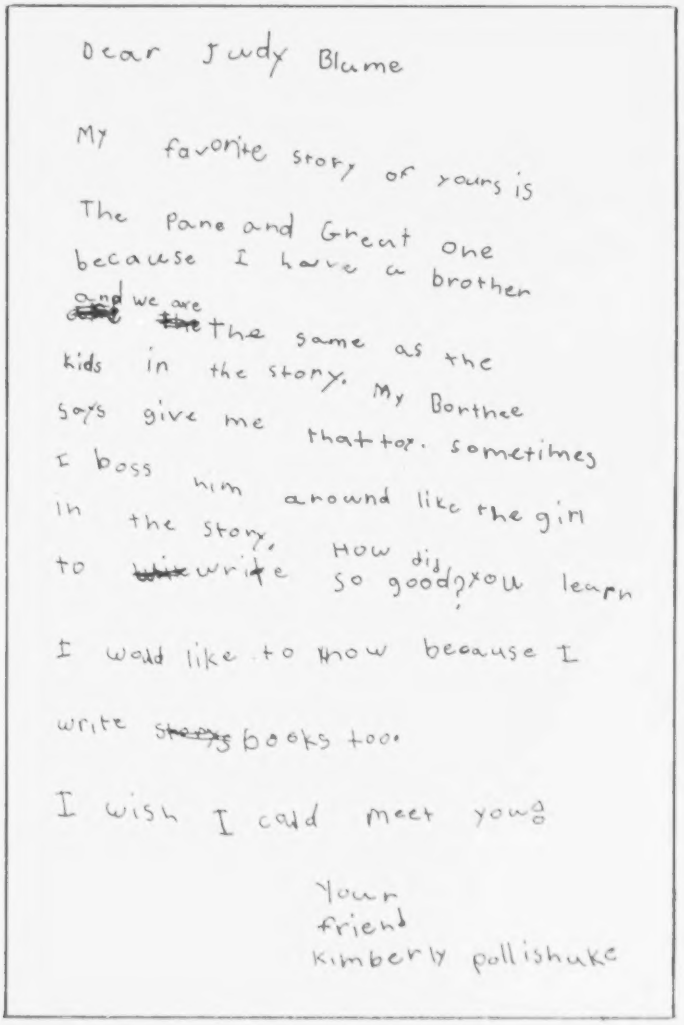
(1) collecting all suitable titles written by the chosen author and making them available to the students;
(2) collecting biographical material about the author from publishers, writers' organizations, books about authors, or from articles in magazines or journals and making these available to the students;
(3) setting up a bulletin board or display to promote the author's visit.

Writing to Authors

Children are encouraged to write to authors that they have met or to authors of their favorite books. They comment on the author's visit, or they comment on the characters, plot, and/or pictures in the books that they have enjoyed. They ask questions of the authors and sometimes the authors will send a reply. Providing students with this opportunity to correspond with their favorite author is an excellent way to develop writing (letter-writing) and reading skills, to say nothing of the accompanying motivation and interest that follows.

(Student letters can be sent to the publishers who will usually forward the letters for you. If desired, writers' organizations can be contacted for information and actual addresses of authors.)

The following is a sample of a letter written to an author by Kimberly, a grade 2 student.



Dear Judy Blume

My favorite story of yours is The Pane and Grent one because I have a brother and we are ~~and~~ ~~the~~ the same as the kids in the story. My Borthee says give me that tar. sometimes I boss him arownd like the girl in the story. How did to ~~wite~~ write so good? you learn

I wald like to know because I write ~~stories~~ books too.

I wish I cald meet you.

Your
friend
Kimberly pollishuke

Writing and Authorship at the Intermediate and Senior Levels

The writing process and a sense of "authorship" need not be restricted to the elementary schools but can be just as effective in junior high and high school classrooms.

In 1983, Brenda Protheroe (presently Vice-Principal in the City of York) worked with her grade 13 students on a writing program which greatly ressembled the one described in this book. The students were exposed to numerous and varied children's books. Read-alouds by the teacher and by students were part of the introductory activities. The students were involved in storytelling exercises, and in discussions about illustrations, values, images, themes, and patterns. A detailed study of fairy tales followed in which students spent time working in small groups to modernize a tale. Before they wrote, they spent much time discussing ideas.

Students were then asked to create their own children's books and they were expected to "test" their books in the junior school nearby. Some of them even had the pages of their books put onto slides and they prepared an accompanying tape of their story to go into the library for the young children to enjoy.

One grade 13 student expressed her reaction and feelings about being an author.

> "I can't believe it. I actually wrote a book! Not a short story or essay or poem, but a real book with illustrations. Once the book had been laminated and bound together and I held it in my hands, I felt a sudden surge of happiness and pride. Then, when I gazed upon the cover and saw the six magic words — 'written and illustrated by Jasna Medunic' — I almost got up on my desk and screamed with ecstasy. Indeed, finishing my book was one of my finest moments.
>
> But then another challenge stood before me. I liked my book, but would the real critics, the children, like my book? That was the question. On May 11, 1983, I set off to J. R. Wilcox to find out. I visited a grade 2 class first.....As I read, I looked around at them. Their eyes were wide and their mouths were slightly opened. I continued, feeling a bit more confident. At the end they all clapped.....Soon I had to go, but not before they told me just how much they had liked my book. I don't think I've ever been praised quite so highly before. I left the class with my head in the clouds and my feet barely touching the ground.....As I skipped down the hallway, I felt great. They had truly liked my book. Then and there I decided to go home and write something new, for I had for the first time, realized how it felt to have people really appreciate your work. I also realized that authors take pleasure in their work not just because they make money from books sales, but also because they enjoy it thoroughly. The smiles from the children made up for all the

hours I had spent thinking up my tale, and all the nights I had sat up doing my pictures. It was most certainly a worthwhile experience."[6]

Similar programs are becoming more and more popular. In North York, many schools are involved in a Learning-Partner-Across-the-Panels program in which senior or intermediate level students meet with elementary school children on joint story-writing efforts.

The experiences are varied. The older students interview the younger child and then write a book about the child using him/her as the main character in the book. The older students help the younger ones with conferencing, revising, editing, and proofreading. The older students also serve as scribes writing the stories that the younger students dictate. Sometimes, they even serve as illustrators for younger students' books.

Participants in this program feel it is a positive and worthwhile experience for all students and for all teachers involved.

Films about Authors and Publishing

Many appropriate films are available that show students the actual work of publishing. These films clearly illustrate the enormous amount of work that is put into the production of a picture book. The students identify with the authors when they see that a professional author too must revise and rewrite his or her work often.

If your board has a film library, films may be found by looking in the film catalogue under the topic of "Authors," "Illustrators," or "Children's Literature." The public libraries also have film loan facilities. Examples of good films to view include the following:

Film Title	Produced By	Distributed by	Annotation
Story of a Book (First Edition)	Churchill Films 662 North Robertson Blvd. Los Angeles, Calif. 90069-5089	Churchill Films	about author H. C. Holling who wote Pagoo, the Hermit Crab (Prim./ Jr level) 1962
Storymaker	Churchill Films	McIntyre Educational Media 30 Kelfield St. Rexdale, Ont. Canada M9W 5A2	creation of a children's book by author/illustrator Don Freeman (Prim./Jr/Interm.) 1972
Story of a Book (Second Edition)	Pied Piper Productions	McIntyre Educational Media	about author Marguerite Henry (Jr/Interm.) 1980

6. Quoted in *Growing with Books: Children's Literature in the Formative Years and Beyond,* pp. 99-100. Forthcoming publication, Ministry of Education, Toronto, Ontario.

Floating on the Waves	National Film Board of Canada 1 Lombard St. Toronto M5C 1J6	National Film Board of Canada 1 Lombard St. Toronto M5C 1J6	about author Lucy Maud Montgomery who wrote *Anne of Green Gables* (Prim./ Jr/Interm.) 1974
Tomi Ungerer: Storyteller	Weston Woods Studios (Can.) Ltd. 464 McNicoll Ave. Willowdale M2H 2E1	Weston Woods Studios (Can.) Ltd.	wrote *Moon Man, The Best of Racine,* and *The Three Robbers* (Jr/Interm./ Sr) 1981
The Lively Art of Picture Books	Weston Woods Studios (Can.) Ltd.	Weston Woods Studios (Can.) Ltd.	interviews with Robert McCloskey, Maurice Sendak, Barbara Cooney (Jr/Interm./Sr) 1964

Trips

A class excursion to a printing and/or publishing company is a valuable and eye-opening experience. Students see first-hand the processes, the machinery, and the many jobs involved in the publishing of a book. Contacting a printing and/or publishing company will establish whether or not tours are available there.

Inviting a Publisher to Visit

A publisher or person employed by a publishing house might be persuaded to visit your classroom. A good idea is to inquire if any of the students in your school have a relative working in the publishing field. This person might be very willing to come in to meet the students. He/she might bring in samples of the publishing process (such as finished and unfinished books, books covers, end papers, etc.) for the children to view and discuss. Children should be given ample opportunity to ask questions. Afterwards, they will begin to notice the names of publishers on books that they are reading. They will become excited when they recognize the publishing house with which they have become familiar.

CHAPTER 7

Publishing Student Writing

Steps to Follow in Publishing

Children are encouraged to write story after story following the "Steps to Follow in Storywriting" for several weeks or even months to establish firmly the writing routines and the co-operative learning experiences. The time period depends on the individual class or student.

There are numerous ways to publish student writing.

lists	plays
charts	radio plays
letters	newspaper articles
postcards	class newspaper
reports	book form
poetry printed on art work	songs
banners	jokes
filmstrips	games
television boxes	recipes

The rewriting of stories into book form is *one* form of publishing. It is one of the end products in the writing process. Although the emphasis should not be on the finished product, this form of publishing **does** produce many good benefits. A few books published by each child provides excellent incentive for writing, adds to the sense of authorship, and creates an awareness of audience. It produces increased feelings of self-worth and satisfaction, and often causes an improvement in attitudes towards school.

The published books become an excellent reading resource in the classroom and often students become motivated to read. They begin to take out larger numbers of books from the library for they want to see what other authors have done or they want to obtain ideas for their own books.

The degree of sophistication in the making of the published book

is not important. The act of publishing a story into book form should not be an onerous task for teachers or for students. Having a publishing centre in the classroom or library where the students go to pick up the materials they will need for their finished books makes the process of publishing a fast and easy task. Having book covers made in advance also helps to speed up the process.

The following steps provide guidelines to follow. This list is posted for the students to refer to.

Steps to Follow in Publishing

1. **Decide which story you would like to publish.**
2. **Share your story with a partner,**
   with a conference group,
   with the class, or
   with your teacher.
   Answer any questions.
3. **Revise your story if necessary. Add or change it.**
4. **Edit and proofread your story.**
   (Correct all spelling and punctuation errors. Work with at least two other people in the class.)
5. **Divide your story up into pages. Number each section.**
6. **Prepare the paper for your book. (Refer to the formula.)**
7. **Rewrite (or type) your story into book form.**
   Add: Illustrations
   Dedication page
   Canadian Author Stamp
   Title page
   "About the Author" page
   Borrower's card and envelope
   Synopsis page
   Other?
8. **Sew your book together.**
9. **Attach your cover.**
10. **Share your book.**

[Note: Teachers may want their students to fill out the student worksheet entitled "Evaluation of Published Books" as step 11. This worksheet is found in the Evaluation section of this book.]

Editing and Proofreading (Step 4)

Editing and proofreading skills provide valuable opportunities for making an important impact on children's writing. Students realize the importance and necessity of editing when they decide to publish their books. They realize that their work will be read by a real audience and it becomes important to them that their writing be clear and well-edited.

When the students are ready for editing and proofreading — step 4 — the teacher again models for the group (or for individual students). A story is written on a chart or overhead. This story may be one that the teacher herself/himself has written or one that has been written by one of the students in the class. Spelling and punctuation errors are included to provide practice in specific proofreading and editing strategies.

The teacher encourages the students to read and reread the writing, each time correcting some aspect of it.

The following guidelines are encouraged.

i. Read the composition over and over again several times looking at one aspect of editing at a time.
   - Read the composition aloud to check for sentence sense and clarity. (This step is often accomplished during steps 2 and 3 in the Steps to Follow in Publishing. Through practice and discussion, students are taught to recognize and correct sentence fragments and run-on sentences.)

ii. Read the composition again several times and each time check for the correct usage of specific punctuation. Put a box around what you are unsure.
   - Capitals at the beginning of sentences.
   - Capitals on the names of people or places.
   - Capitals on titles of books.
   - Periods at the end of sentences.
   - Question marks at the end of questions.
   - Exclamation marks at the end of sentences to demonstrate a show of expression.
   - Quotation marks to indicate speech.

iii. Read the composition again and check for spelling errors. Circle words which look wrong and may be spelled wrong. Then find the correct spelling of the words using the dictionary, the thesaurus, or other people as resources.

A checklist or chart is made up and posted to remind students what to look for when doing their own or their peer's proofreading. An example of a more complete list is found in the section entitled "EVALUATION OF STUDENT WRITING." This list may prove useful to teachers in deciding some of the points to include in the list for the students. I am not suggesting that all of the points in the list be included, as too many aspects to correct all at once will be overwhelming for children.

Student Practice

- Students are encouraged to work together in pairs to practise editing and proofreading skills.
- In order to reinforce and provide guided practice in proofreading techniques, some of the students' writing may be written on chart paper or photocopied for other students to refer to. In this activity, the piece of writing is purposely copied with many errors in punctuation and form to illustrate that errors are the necessary tools for learning. The student author is not made to feel inferior because of all the mistakes, but is made to feel important for it is his or her story that is being reviewed. The passage is then read and reread several times, and the class participates in proofreading and editing. The class may work individually or in groups.
- This activity might be used as a listening centre activity. Students put their own stories on tape, exaggerating the pauses and rests as indicators of the punctuation needed. Copies of their error-filled stories are left at the centre for other students to read and correct. The student author helps to evaluate other students' editing skills. Clues may be left at the centre to help facilitate the task of evaluation.

  For example, John might write:

  > "In my story entitled 'John meets the Monster', you will need to add:
  > 12 capitals
  > 10 periods
  > 1 question mark
  > 1 exclamation mark."

  This activity adds a sense of importance and self-esteem to the student author and provides added motivation and interest to others as they anticipate that their story will be next to edit. It also provides needed editing practice in a more controlled situation. The teacher is able to assess the students' progress with ease.

Dividing the Story into Pages

Step 5 in the "Steps to Follow in Publishing" encourages the students to examine their revised and edited rough draft stories and divide them up into pages to prepare for the actual publishing into book form.

The directions are:

> "Draw a line separating a sentence (or series of sentences) in your story that will bring to mind a picture."
>
> (The concept of paragraphs is easily taught at this point.)

The students are asked to number each sentence or group of sentences that they have sectioned off. These sections each represent one page of their book.

An example of this technique follows.

Goldilocks tasted the porridge in the smallest bowl. She said, "This is just right," and she ate it all up.	Picture of Goldilocks eating the porridge.
She then saw three chairs.	Picture of the three chairs.
She sat on the largest chair and said, "This one is too hard."	Picture of Goldilocks sitting on the largest chair with a dissatisfied look on her face.

The following is a sample story written by Stephanie, a grade 3 student.

The Circus

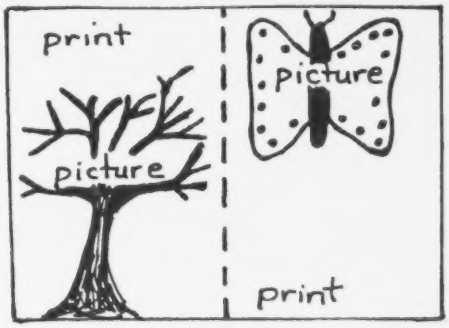
One Monday night my family and I went to the circus. We got to our seats in time for the circus to start. There were three rings and in each ring there was something different happening.

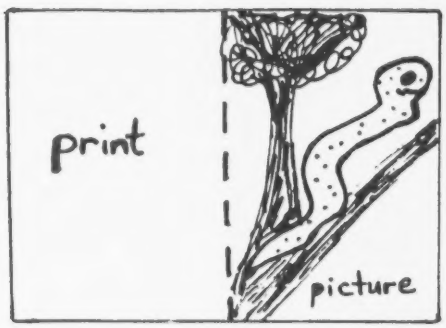
The first thing I saw were the people who were going to be in the circus. They walked around the 3 rings. They waved their hands at us. Then the lights turned out and the circus began. A clown in an old antique car came out and rode around the rings.

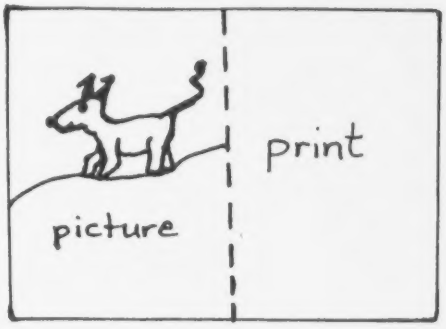
77

Format of Books and Illustrations

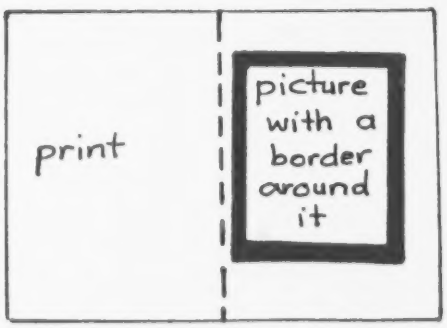
The students decide on the format of their books and how to position the print and illustrations on each page. The following are examples:



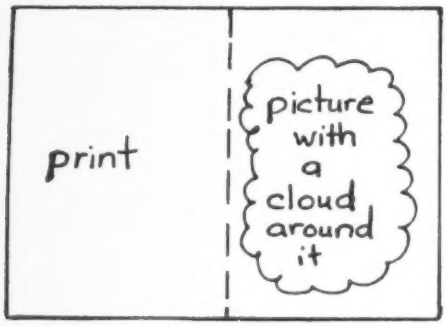




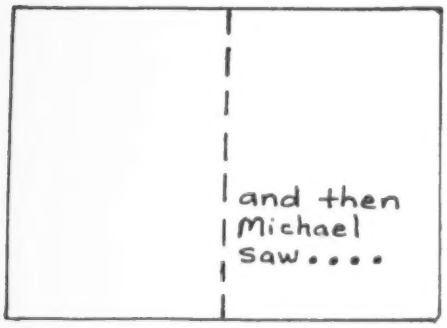
The techniques used for the illustrations might include:



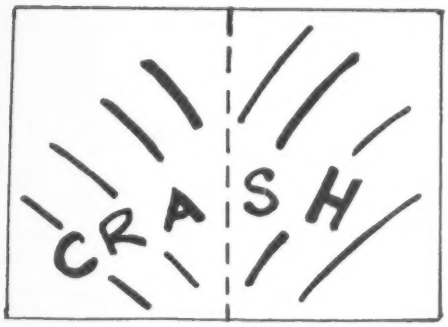
A border around each picture.



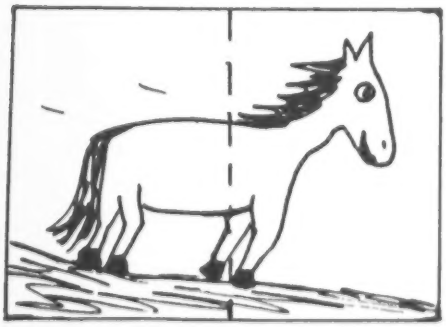
A cloud effect around each picture.



Creating suspense by putting one part of a sentence on one page, and the rest on the page following.

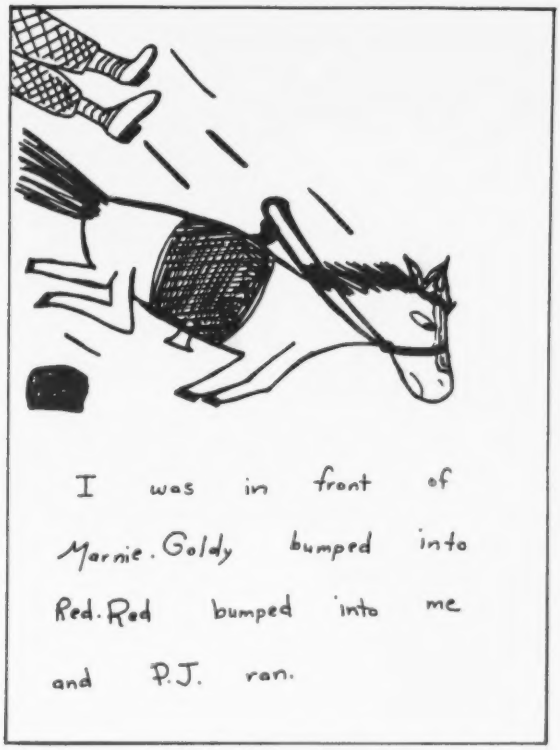


One word exploding across two pages.



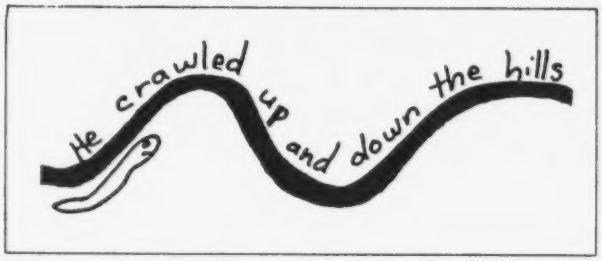
One picture covering two pages.

Part of a picture just disappearing off the page.



The technique of cartooning, which is the positioning of more than one picture and print on one page.

Using print in an unusual way.



Concrete writing.

These art techniques are pointed out by the teacher during the reading of picture books to students. Lessons encouraging children to examine numerous picture books will help make students more aware and creative in their own attempts.

This part of the writing process is easily incorporated into the art program. Lessons and practice with sketching, centre of interest, background, perspective, and color encourage students to add details and realism to their finished products.

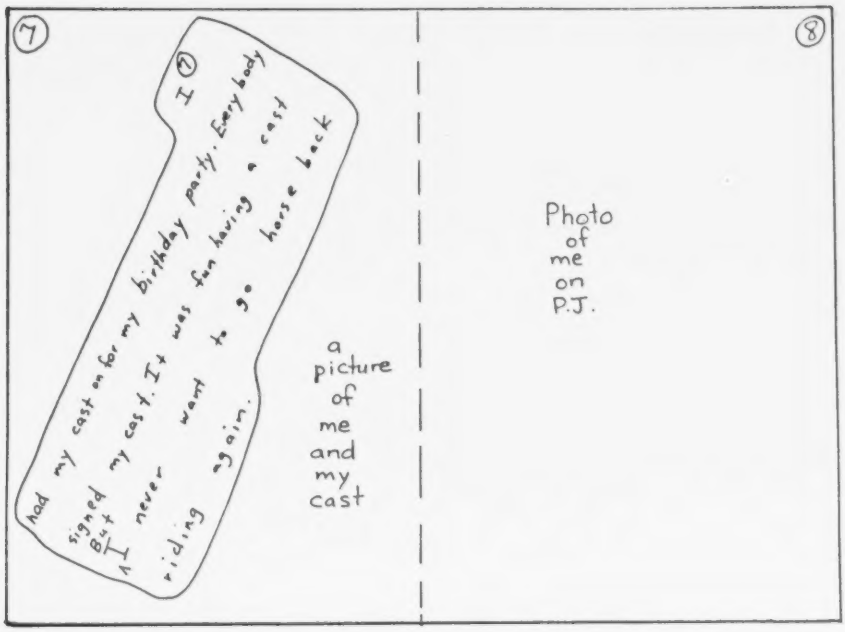
Lessons on texture are easily introduced when students are allowed to add interesting material such as tissue paper, fabric, tin foil, string, twigs, and so on, to their pictures. For a different effect, magazine or newspaper pictures can be cut out and glued on as part of the whole picture.

The Rough Copy Book

Students produce a rough copy book, if desired, which provides them with a visual aid in producing their final published book.

- Inexpensive newsprint is utilized, cut the same size as the paper to be used for the final book.
- These pages are numbered.
- The rough copy story that had been divided into sections beforehand is cut up and glued onto the corresponding pages.
- Extra pages (which are described in the section entitled "The Finishing Touches") are also added in rough form to this book.
- The pictures to be drawn on each page are described in the spaces above or below the print or are quickly sketched.

The illustration on the top of page 74 is taken from a rough copy book written by Rena, a grade 3 student.


7
I had my cast on for my birthday party. Everybody signed my cast. It was fun having a cast But I never went to go horse back riding again.
a picture of me and my cast
8
Photo of me on P.J.

A Formula to Decide the Number of Pages Needed

After students become familiar with publishing, they may want to omit the making of the rough copy book. If the students use blank paper folded in half, they need to use their mathematical skills to determine the number of pages they will need for their published book. The following formula is written on a chart and referred to. (Note: One sheet of paper folded in half with all faces used yields four pages in a published book. Both sides of the paper are used to add authenticity to the final book.)

_____page for glue (to attach the book to its front cover)
_____page for the dedication (and author's stamp or sticker)
_____page for the title page (for title, author, and publisher's name)
_____page for print and/or illustrations
_____page for "About the Author"
_____page for the card and envelope
_____page for glue (to attach the book to its back cover)
_____total number of pages in the book ÷ 4 = _____ number of pages (folded in half)

Thus, a book with seven pages of print and/or illustrations added to all the other pages equals a total of thirteen pages. This number divided by four equals three pages with a remainder of one. It is better to have too many pages than not enough; consequently our thirteen-page book needs four papers folded in half. It has three pages left over, the content of which is decided upon later.

For younger students who are not familiar with the mathematical operation of division, there is an easier way. For a book that needs a total of thirteen pages, the teacher encourages the children to count the papers that will be used for the published book to the number thirteen. Since one piece of paper yields four sides, the counting is by fours.

Example: One paper equals four pages in the book.
One more equals eight.
One more equals twelve.
Another would equal sixteen.

The children see at once that there will be some empty pages left over in the finished book.

Simple versions of these books are also put together without using the formula. Any size paper is utilized and attached by either stapling, sewing, or tying the sides together with string.

Print

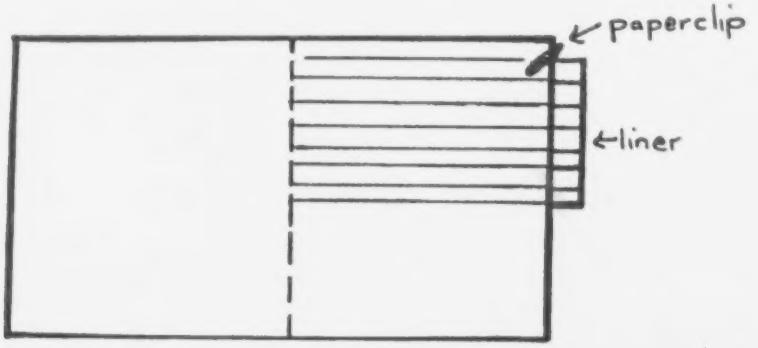
The students then begin their final copy. The print is handwritten by the child, typed by the child or by parent helpers, or typed and printed on the computer using a word processor program (see Chapter 8, "The Computer and the Writing Process," pp. 82-84).

If children are planning to use the computer, they can work on their illustrations while they are waiting for their turn. When they are finished they cut and glue the computer print-out onto the appropriate pages of their book.

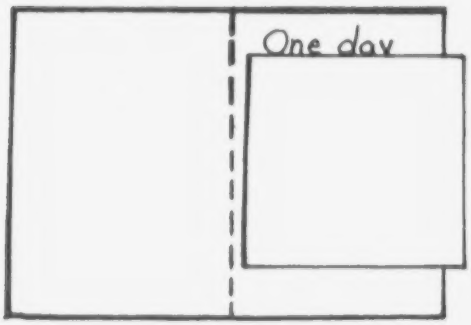
If children decide to hand-print their book, they are taught to write neatly on blank paper without drawing lines.

One method is to use a liner (lined paper) placed underneath their page. The lines are faintly seen and the students are able to write their words in a straight line. A paperclip may be used to secure the liner in place while writing.

Example:



Example:

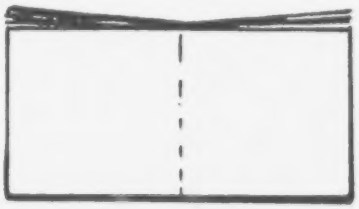


Another method is to use a piece of paper placed on top of the page that students are working on as a guide to straight writing. They line this paper up with the middle or end of their page and then write or print their words, adding the bottoms of letters after they have finished the complete line.

Sewing (or Stapling) the Book Together

The book is sewn along the fold line, by the student or by parent helpers, using needle and thread. Dental floss is an excellent alternative for thread, since it is much stronger and does not tend to break. A sewing machine is fast and simple, if available.

Example:



A long arm stapler can also be used to secure the book instead of sewing it together. However, if the pages of the book are too many for the stapler to go through, use a heavy-duty stapler.

An extra piece of paper (white or colored) is added to the front of the book and sewn along with the pages of the book. These extra end pages serve as endpapers.

The Cover

Paperback

Simple covers can be used to produce paperback books. White or colored blank paper or construction paper folded in half can be used, with illustration, name of student author and illustrator, and title of book on the front.

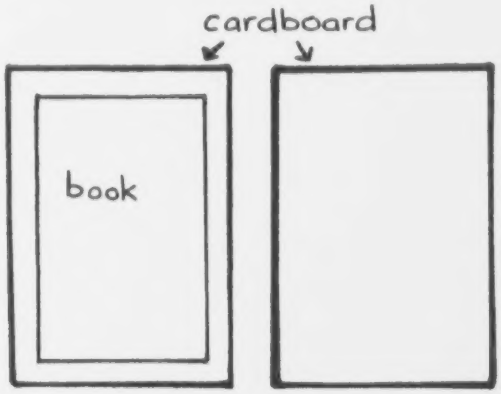
Out-of-date wallpaper books, donated free of charge by wallpaper stores in your neighborhood, can be used for book covers. Pages from these wallpaper books are folded in half and the edges trimmed or folded inwards.

Hardcover

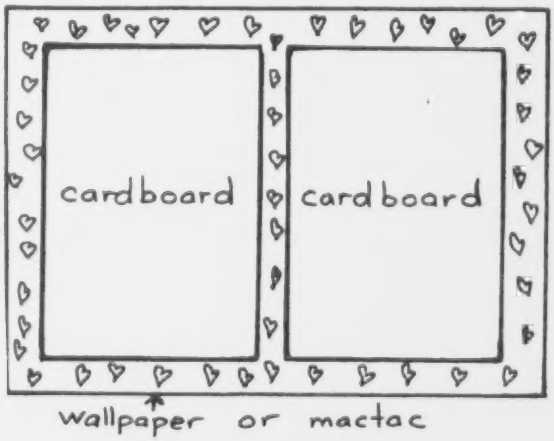
Hardcover books can be produced by using cloth, mactac, or wallpaper over cardboard pieces.

Two pieces of cardboard are cut slightly larger than the book pages.

Example:



The cloth, mactac, or wallpaper is cut about three centimetres larger than the cardboard pieces which are laid one beside the other, with a space in the middle so the book can open easily.



For cloth, a piece of drymount is cut slightly larger than the two cardboard pieces put together. This drymount fits between the cloth and the cardboard. With an iron, the cardboard is pressed in a few places to hold it in place. Then the top, bottom, and sides are folded and ironed.

Using mactac is a more expensive but far simpler method. The cardboard pieces are placed on the mactac. The top, sides, and bottom are folded and easily secured.

Prepasted wallpaper is a much cheaper method and when wet is easily secured onto the cardboard pieces.

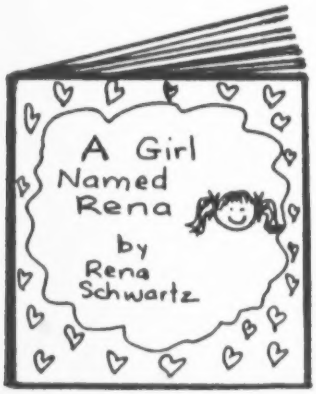
The cover includes:

- the name of the author and illustrator

- an illustration about the story
- the call number, if desired
  (This is usually written on the spine of the book but can be written on the front cover near the spine.)

REMEMBER: An attractive cover is an invitation to the reader.

A good idea is to cut paper in an interesting shape and glue onto the cover for writing the information needed and for drawing the illustration about the story. This is necessary when using a patterned wallpaper or material as the cover. The cover may be protected and secured by placing a piece of clear mactac cut a little bit larger over it.



Attaching the Book to Its Cover

The backs of the endpapers are glued and are then secured to the already prepared cover — that is, to the inside front and the inside back of the cover. White bond glue or paper cement works well.

An alternative method of attaching the book to its cover is to use drymount. Drymount is bought from any photo service supply store or can be ordered through your board of education's stock catalogue supplies. A piece of drymount cut the same size as the open pages of the book is placed at the front of the pages in the book and then sewn together with all the other pages of the book. The drymount is ironed onto the cover. It fuses and attaches the book to its cover permanently and neatly without using glue.

The Finishing Touches

Some of the following points which may be implemented as part of the final published book have already been discussed, but they are listed below as a checklist.

The Cover

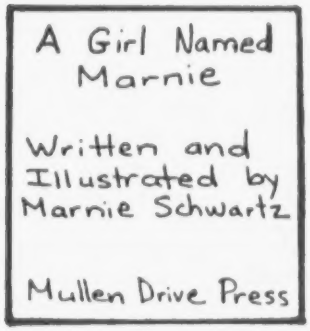
(See the previous section.)

Endpapers

An extra sheet of paper (blank paper, colored construction paper, or patterned wallpaper) folded in half is added to the book to act as the endpapers for the front and back of the book. These endpapers attach the book neatly and easily to its cover, by gluing or by ironing if drymount has been used.

Title Page

Example:

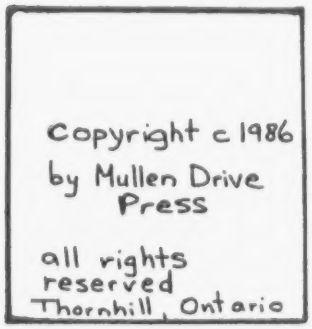


The title page includes:

- the name of the book
- the author and illustrator
- the publishing company at the bottom
- an author stamp or sticker, if desired

Back of the Title Page

Example:



The back of the title page includes:

- the copyright date
- all rights reserved
- the name of the publishing company
- where printed

Dedication Page

The students may wish to dedicate their book to parents, teachers, friends, or anyone who has helped them or inspired them in the writing of their book.

Contents Page (at the front)

This page is necessary if the book contains a collection of stories or chapters.

"About the Author" Page (at the back)

A short synopsis about the student author is included here, often with a photograph of the student. Sometimes this synopsis is written by another student in the class who has interviewed the author. (See the section entitled "Materials Needed – g", p. 12 for more information.)

Comment Page (at the back)

This page is left blank for the comments of students and adults who have read the book. This page is not typical of a "real" book but is worthwhile as a way of reinforcing the students' self-esteem and pride as writers.

Borrower's Card and Book Pocket Envelope (at the back)

Student books are circulated through the class and/or through the school library and may be signed out in the regular way. (See the section entitled "Materials Needed – e", p. 11.)

Glossary (Index or Dictionary Page) (at the back)

If unusual words or terms (or words written in a different language) are used in the book, the students might want to include a glossary page at the back of their books. Words are listed in alphabetical order and meanings explained. Small drawings can be included.

Riddle or Trivia Page

If students have blank pages at the end of their book, they might want to add a riddle or trivia page. The questions should have something to do with the characters, storylines, or events. A crossword puzzle or word search may be included as well. Other creative ideas are encouraged.

Synopsis Page

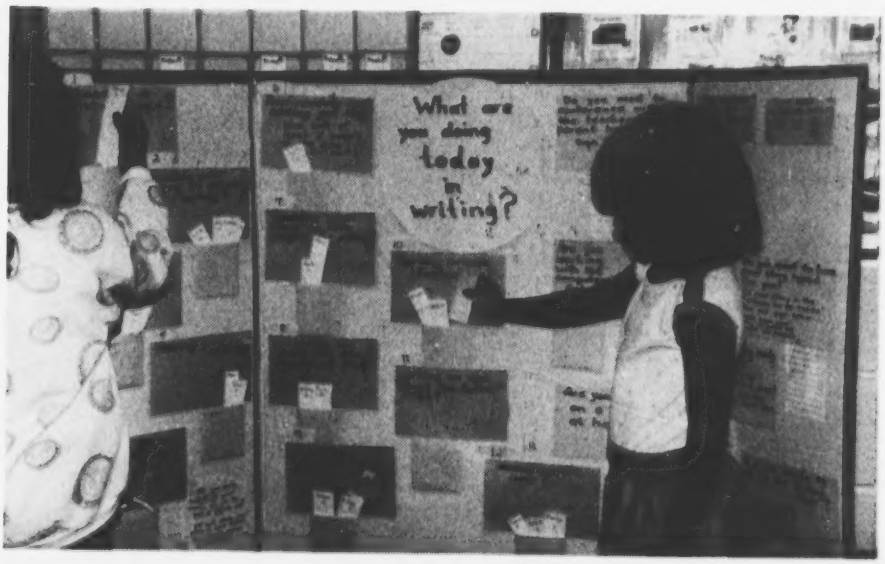
A synopsis page is included on the back cover of the finished book. This paragraph gives a short summary of the book, advertising the story. Children are encouraged to tell only a small part of the story and to make the information so exciting that others will be enticed to read it.

The example of a synopsis page at the top of page 81 is written by Elysia in grade 3.

My poetry book is about poems. Some poems are about the seasons. And some poems are about other things. And if you read this book there will be one poem just for you!

Planning Board for Writing

A good organizational tool for both teachers and students is to set up a planning board for writing. The steps to follow in storywriting and publishing are written on cards with pockets attached and are displayed. Student name cards are placed in the pockets to indicate where the students are in the process of writing. Each day students are encouraged to check the planning board to see if their name card is in the right pocket. In this way children focus on what they have to do for that day. Teachers can see at a glance at which stage each child is working.



C H A P T E R 8

The Computer and the Writing Process

As the importance of and need for the computer increases in our technological society, more and more computers are emerging in education. Word processing packages are being used in classrooms often to facilitate writing and language programs. A teacher need only experiment with a particular program in order to discover its strengths, its weaknesses, and its many benefits.

Real audiences for writing are capitalized upon by the use of the computer. Students produce class newspapers or newsletters easily and quickly on the computer. The illustration on page 83 is a sample of the first page of a class newspaper using the program "The Newsroom":

THE SPRUCE AND MAIL
ARBOR GLEN P.S.
SPRUCE POD
VOLUME 1 NUMBER 1 APRIL 10, 1987
ON APRIL 1ST. 1987, ARBOR GLEN PUBLIC P.S., SPRUCE POD, WENT TO HARBOURFRONT SCHOOL BY THE WATER. ONE GROUP WAS CLAYMAKING WHILE THE OTHER GROUP WAS PRINTMAKING WITH SILKSCREENS. MY FRIEND, ELAINE HSU, MADE A PIG JUST LIKE THE ONE IN THIS PICTURE. I MADE A BOWL.
BY: ARMEEN BHESANIA
HONEY BEAR
YESTERDAY A BEAR ATTACKED A TENT WITH TWO PEOPLE IN IT. THE BEAR WAS LOOKING FOR LUNCH AND HE FOUND IT. THERE WAS A JAR OF HONEY. THE PEOPLE CALLED THE POLICE AND TOLD THEM WHAT HAPPENED.
WHEN THE POLICE GOT THERE THEY LET THE BEAR SAFELY BACK INTO THE FOREST. TORONTO,ONTARIO
THURS. APR. 9, 1987
BY: BARKIN
MAN IN HOSPITAL
Toronto, April 1st,1987
MAN GETS RABIES MAD DOG BIT HIM IN HIS LEG MAN GOES TO HOSPITAL FOR MONTH.DOG BIT TWO AND A HALF INCHES DEEP MAN IS OKAY BUT DOG IS PUT TO SLEEP.
LOST KITTEN
LOST KITTEN BLACK AND WHITE HAIR.SHORT TAIL AND BROWN EYES. LEFT HOME A WEEK AGO.IF ANYBODY SEES KITTEN PLEASE CALL:926-2646 $100 REWARD.
ON MONDAY, APRIL 6, 1987, THE "PARACHUTE" ARRIVED AT ARBOR GLEN. IT MAKES GYM SO MUCH FUN !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

For the students experiencing difficulty with fine motor skills, the computer serves as a typewriter. Printing and cursive writing difficulties are easily alleviated. Students become more confident in their own abilities, and motivation to write increases. Students are excited about using the computer for writing, and this excitement is often transferred to their writing in general.

The computer is an important tool for writing, but the same thought processes, the same philosophy about the "process' of writing should be practised. Students must continue to be involved in daily writing, in interaction and discussion of storylines before, during, and after writing. They must be involved in continued revision, proofreading, editing, and sharing activities.

The greatest advantage to using word processing is in the area of revising and editing. Students easily and quickly correct mechanical errors and spelling mistakes. They add and rearrange words,

sentences, or whole paragraphs. They never have to write a second draft but easily print out copies of their stories. They receive immediate feedback from readers.

Students are able to "publish" with ease the stories that they print on the computer.

- Before the story is printed, be sure to leave spaces between each page in your book.
- Print your story.
- On the computer print out, number each page to correspond to the page numbers in your book. (Prepare the paper in advance. See the section on "Publishing Student Writing," p. 65.)
- Cut one section at a time and glue onto the corresponding page in your book.
- Add illustrations, cover, and finishing touches, if desired.

Another idea (especially good for junior children who do a great deal of writing) is to staple or sew the print-out pages together to form the actual pages of the book.

In order to see benefits in children's writing with the use of the computer, students need to become as proficient with the particular word processing program that they are using as they are with a pencil. Often this proves difficult when there is only one computer and thirty children. Students become more absorbed with the machine than they are with the content and quality of their writing.

The computer needs to be utilized as often as possible in the classroom to increase student familiarity and competence. One idea that allows a greater number of students access to the computer is to use the computer as a story starter.

- Two students begin a story on the computer together.
- They print out two copies of the beginning and then use this beginning as a story starter.
- They then finish their stories in handwriting, either individually (since both the students have a copy of the story starter) or together.

CHAPTER 9

How Can Parents Help?

Parents often ask how they can help with their children's education. The writing process is an excellent way to get parents involved. At a curriculum night early in the school year, important information about the writing process should be presented to parents. Parents need to have a clear understanding of what their children are doing in school and why. They need to be made aware that this process approach to writing is indeed different from what they themselves had experienced in their own schooling. With this program, children are encouraged to see themselves as authors, and the writing activities that they go through are much the same as the activities that professional authors go through. They choose their own topics to write about, they write draft copies of stories, they revise and reshape their ideas, they share their work often with other students and with teachers, and they decide which pieces of writing are to be published.

Parents need to be reminded that writing is not easy. We, as parents and as educators, need to work together to make writing a non-threatening activity, an activity in which children will **want** to write and will feel free to take risks with writing. A good attitude and a genuine desire to write is therefore very important to students' ability and progress in school.

Parents can help at home by being supportive and by praising their children's attempts at writing. They should resist the temptation to focus on spelling, punctuation, and grammar, keeping in mind that writing and spelling are developmental skills which improve with practice and with time.

Parents help at home by sharing and discussing experiences with their children. Family trips, outings, and social get-togethers form the basis for many of the stories that children write.

Parents serve as models for their children by grasping opportunities to write whenever possible. They should write for real purposes such as letters, notes, invitations, birthday cards, shopping lists, journals, diaries, and so on.

Parent volunteers can help with the writing process in many ways.

- making book covers for the publishing centre

- sewing books together
- typing students' stories
- typing card catalogue file cards
- putting accession numbers on books
- editing stories with children
- providing funds for wallpaper, mactac, drymount (Parents' Home and School Association might be helpful here.)

The following letter lists further ideas of how parents can help with writing. The letter may be useful to give to parents early in the school year.

Dear Parents,

How can *you* help your child with writing?

- Ask your child to tell you what his/her next or present draft is about. Make suggestions for topics by reminding children of personal experiences, family outings, or trips that might make an interesting story. (Step 7)
- Ask questions about the content of the story to help to develop the storyline. (Step 2)
- Ask your child to read his/her story out loud. Stop and ask questions about the piece's content. (Step 4)
- Encourage your child to change or add to his/her writing, if necessary. (Step 5)

Below is an outline of the procedures for our process writing.

* * *

1. Choose a topic.
2. "Talk-out" and discuss your story with a partner.
3. Write your first draft.
   - Write as fast as you can, but write legibly.
   - Do not use an eraser to slow you down but cross out words.
   - Don't worry about spelling. Use "inventive" spelling.
   - Write on every other line and only use one side of the paper. (This leaves space to add words or sentences later.)
4. Share your writing with a partner,
   with the class,
   with a conference group, or
   with your teacher.

   Answer any questions.
5. Revise your writing, if you wish. Add or change it.
6. Store your writing in your writing folder.
7. Choose a new topic and begin again.

* * *

How can *you* help your child with publishing?

- Help again with steps 2 and 3.
- To help with editing (step 4), encourage your child to read and reread his/her piece, each time looking for some aspect of editing. Examples are: sentence sense
  capitals and periods

question marks
quotation marks
too many instances of "and" and "then"
spelling errors

- Point out needed revisions in mechanics. Let your child make the actual corrections. (Step 4)
  ***REMEMBER, BE POSITIVE, BE ENCOURAGING, BE AN EDITOR/HELPER.
- Help your child divide his/her story into sections to prepare for the different pages of the finished book. Each page should bring to mind a picture. Each section should be numbered. (Step 5)

The following are the steps we will be taking in publishing.

1. Decide which story you would like to publish.
2. Share your story with a partner,
   with a conference group,
   with the class, or
   with your teacher.
   Answer any questions.
3. Revise your story if necessary. Add or change it.
4. Proofread your story and edit. (Correct all punctuation and spelling errors. Work with at least two other people in the class.)
5. Divide your story up into pages. Number each section.
6. Prepare the paper for your book.
7. Rewrite your story into book form.
   Add: pictures
   dedication page
   title page
   "About the Author" page
8. Sew or staple your book together.
9. Attach your cover.
10. Share your book.

Learning to write well is an important communication skill. Thank you for helping your author on the path to developing writing skills and competence. Your interest means a great deal.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

P.S. We are in need of parent typists who would be willing to type finished stories into book form on a regular basis. This would be greatly welcomed and appreciated.

If you are available, please sign below and return this portion to us. You will be contacted soon. Thank you again.

I, _____ can help with the typing of student stories.

_____

NAME PHONE NUMBER

CHAPTER 10

Evaluation of Student Writing

Formative (On-Going) Evaluation

Formative or on-going evaluation is daily teacher observation and evaluation of student activities related to writing. The emphasis here is on observing and evaluating the students' **involvement** in the **"process"** of writing. The main purpose of evaluation of writing is to help students to grow, to learn, and to improve in their ability to write and in their attitudes towards writing.

The page entitled "Teacher's Comments" on the writing folders may contain comments written during conferences with the child. (See the section on "The Writing Folder," p. 5.)

The teacher keeps anecdotal records of each child's progress and notes strengths, weaknesses, and areas of concern. The teacher then assists, instructs, and plans lessons for individuals or for groups of students when the need arises.

The use of post-its for anecdotal reports is useful. The teacher divides a page up into squares the same size as the post-its. The name of each student in the class is written on each square. When the teacher records an observation about a child's progress on the post-it, it is placed on the appropriate square on the page. The teacher is able to evaluate progress instantly. These post-its are later transferred to a one-page summary of the child's progress, which becomes an instant resource at reporting time.

Summative Evaluation (A Look at the Product)

Summative evaluation is a look at the **product** rather than at the **process** of writing. It is a positive assessment of an individual's writing abilities at a certain point in time.

Evaluation of the finished writing product should not be confused with ranking or grading of students' writing. Studies on evaluation

of writing have shown that emphasizing marks intimidates students and actually slows down progress. When risk-taking is punished with lowered grades, students become cautious and unwilling to experiment. When marking or evaluating writing, teachers should approach it from the point of view of assessment as a teaching device. They should provide encouragement and suggestions, and should respond primarily to content and organization, and secondarily to mechanical errors.

This is not to say that teachers should disregard students' errors completely, saying that they will improve with maturity. Teachers need to be very aware of each child's individual abilities in mechanics, in spelling, and in grammar, for once a teacher knows where the child is, then he or she is better able to program for the needs of that individual child. (The "Analysis of Writing Charts" are be useful in assessing written language skills.)

Evaluation of the Content of Students' Writing

In looking at the **content** of students' writing, it should be remembered that writing is a developmental process that improves with time, with maturity, and with practice. This developmental process might be seen to contain many stages of growth, not all easily discernable. The lowest stage might be a child simply writing any words he/she knows — words that do not necessarily ressemble a storyline. The next stage might be apparent when the child begins to list objects and events that appear to be related in some way. The subsequent stage might see the child describing things happening in a story with the events usually relating directly to the child's past experiences. For example, the child's story might list all those events that occurred between the time he or she awoke in the morning and went to bed at night. This listing of personal chronological events from morning to night is a fairly immature storyline in terms of content.

A story containing imagination or the use of imaginary plots and characters is usually further along in the developmental stages. The use of direct speech, description, metaphors, and allegorical references illustrates further signs of maturity. As development progresses, the storylines might contain creative use of time (time lapses, flashbacks) and/or creative use of settings. Character development becomes evident and the storylines display more continuity from beginning to end.

An understanding of the developmental process of students' writing provides teachers with insight how to better assess the *content* of the product. Once teachers become aware of the strengths and weaknesses of students' writing, once they perceive where students are in their individual writing, they are then better able to work to encourage, develop, and improve these abilities.

Analysis of Writing Forms

The form on page 91 may be used by teachers for individual students as an assessment or record sheet, noting the written language skills evident in a particular piece of writing. Teachers make short anecdotal comments in the boxes and even record some of the actual words used in the students' stories.

With the form, teachers easily see which children are experiencing difficulty and which are at a further developed stage of writing. For example, the student using descriptive language and metaphors would be at a much further stage of development than the student using simple vocabulary and little description.

This form may also prove practical as an aid to report card writing, for it clearly sums up the strengths and weaknesses of each child's written language.

Teachers use this form as a guide for working with individual students on "upgrading" their writing. For example, when teachers notice that a student (or several students) are using simple verbs only in their writing, they work with these students and their stories. They might ask them to underline or circle some of the action words in their stories. Students then brainstorm with others and/or work with the dictionary and thesaurus to find synonyms or more interesting words to use instead of these simple verbs. They are then encouraged to revise their stories using some of these new words. Later, teachers may see some transfer of this learning in subsequent pieces of writing. The quality of children's writing thus improves without resorting to less relevant and often repetitive grammar exercises in a textbook.

Analysis of Student Writing
(Mechanics of Writing)

Name of Student _____

Date _____

Title of Story Analysed _____

Number of Pages in Draft Copy of Story _____

Number of Stories to Date (This Term) _____

Capitalization

I	Beginning of Sentences	Names of People	Names of Places	Names on Titles	Misused Capitals

Punctuation

Periods	Commas	Question Marks	Exclamation Marks	Missing quotation marks	Misplaced quotation marks

Word Sense

Missing Words	Extra Words	Wrong Meanings of Words	Sentence Sense Unclear	Run-on Sentences	Other

Grammar

Subject-Verb Agreement	Pronoun Reference	Verbs Used	Adjectives Used	Metaphors and Similes	Too many of "and or "so"

Spelling

Common Words Misspelled	Homonyms Misspelled	Blends	Vowel Substi-tutions	Vowel Omissions	Apostrophes
Plurals	Endings (ed, ing, tion)	Other			

The following is a similar list analysing student writing, but it is presented in a different format. Teachers may prefer this format, for it allows the progress of several students to be recorded on the one page.

STUDENTS' NAMES	Magda	David	Anna	Charlotte					
Punctuation:									
Missing periods									
Missing commas									
Misplaced commas									
Extra comma									
Missing question marks									
Missing exclamation marks									
Misplaced quotation marks									
Wrong punctuation									
Spelling:									
Errors in (common words)									
Homonyms									
Look-alikes									
Blends									
Vowel substitutions									
Vowel omissions									
Apostrophes									
Missing spaces									
Plurals (s, es)									
Endings (ed, ing, tion)									
Capitalization:									
Missing capitals									
Misused capitals									
Word Sense:									
Missing words									
Extra words									
Misplaced words									
Wrong meanings of words									
Grammar:									
Subject-verb agreements									
Pronoun references									
Run-on sentences									

CHAPTER 11

Student Worksheets

Student Worksheet: A Check on Storywriting

The following student worksheet is designed to be completed by students to aid the teacher in record-keeping and tracking of students' progress. This questionnaire may be given to students after one month of daily writing and frequent teacher input and conference sessions. With this questionnaire, the teacher will have on file the titles or topics of the stories that the students have been working on. The teacher will be able to see at a glance how many stories have been finished and how many stories the students feel are worthy of publication. (Sometimes, students want to publish every one of their stories. These students require teacher input and discussion to be able to self-evaluate, critically analyse, and judge their own stories. They may need lessons on audience appeal and impact.) Also, with this questionnaire, the teacher can see which children are interacting well with others, and which children are getting practice in proofreading and editing skills.

A Check on Storywriting
Student Worksheet

Name _____

Date _____

1. Write the titles or topics of the stories (or poems, recipes, scripts, news reports, etc.) that you have been working on.

   Put a check ✓ after the ones that you have *finished*. Circle the ones that you *may* want to publish.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Write the names of the people that have helped you by
   • listening to you tell or read your story, _____

   _____

   • asking you questions to help you to clarify and develop your story _____

   _____

   • helping you with ideas for your writing _____

   _____

   • proofreading and editing your story for punctuation and spelling errors. _____

   _____

3. Write the names of the people that YOU have helped with storywriting.

   _____

   _____

Student Worksheet: Evaluating the Stories in My Writing Folder

The following student worksheet encourages the students to examine and evaluate the stories that they have written to date. This activity encourages children to check their stories for interesting titles which should reflect the storylines, and to check for effective beginnings, middles, and endings to their stories. Other questions on this worksheet encourage the students to think about ways of improving their storylines. These questions all help to make the students more critical and more aware as writers and as authors.

Note: This worksheet might be useful after a period of continuous writing (perhaps before any publishing has occurred).

Evaluating My Stories in My Writing Folder

Student Worksheet

Name _____

Date _____

1. Read over the stories in your writing folder, and write the title or topic of your FAVORITE story.

   _____

2. Tell WHY it is your favorite.

   _____

   _____

3. Check *this* story to see if it has:
   ☐ a *title* — which makes the audience curious or interested in the story
   ☐ a *beginning* — where we often find the answers to:
      ☐ WHO? (main characters)
      ☐ WHERE? (setting)
      ☐ WHEN?
      ☐ WHAT?
   ☐ a *middle* — where something happens and we find out:
      ☐ WHAT?
      ☐ WHY?
      ☐ HOW?
      ☐ DETAILS
   ☐ an *ending* — where
      ☐ the action is summed up
      ☐ the author's feelings are shared

4. Choose one story from your writing folder that you feel could be improved upon. Write the title or topic.

   _____

5. Check *this* story as in question 3 and then write how you can *improve* one or more of the *title*, the *beginning*, the *middle*, or the *ending*?)

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

Student Worksheet: Evaluating My Storyline

The following worksheet encourages students to examine their stories to learn how to make them more effective. It is helpful to have students think about why they have written their story. They may have written it to entertain, to inform, to tell an event, to bring back memories of a trip, or for many other reasons.

By verbalizing why they think the beginnings, middles, and endings of their stories are "good," students become more aware of effective storylines. Often, a better quality story emerges once students have thought about and recorded on paper ways of improving their initial effort.

Note: This worksheet may be useful for students to fill out after they have made the decision to publish. After completing the worksheet, they may be better able to revise and improve their storylines, thus producing better quality published stories.

Evaluating My Storyline
Student Worksheet

Name _____

Date _____

1. What is the purpose in writing your story? (to entertain, to inform, to tell about . . .)

2. Why do you think other people might like to read your story?

3. What part of your story is the most important?

4. Why do you think the beginning of your story is so effective?

5. Why do you think the middle of your story is so good?

6. Why do you think your ending is good?

7. What is it about your story that you don't like?

8. How can you improve your story?

Student Worksheet: Evaluation of Our Storywriting Time

The following worksheet acts as a good incentive for some children by encouraging them to follow the steps to storywriting or to publishing. As well, it helps to reinforce the codes of behavior established during writing time. Question 3 encourages the students to seek out a friend or conference group before relying on the teacher for help. Questions 4 and 5 encourage proper conduct during writing time, which is indeed necessary to the general learning atmosphere in the class. Conference groups are extremely difficult to run if the teacher needs to stop every few minutes to discipline children who are not co-operating properly with others and who are not in the immediate conference group. Question 6 encourages the students to look at and rate the amount of work that they have accomplished during writing time. Students become better judges of their own efforts and learn to set their own goals for improvement. Question 7 lets the teacher know which children are motivated enough to take their writing home to work on. The spaces for student, teacher, and parent comments encourage open communication between home and school and between pupil and teacher.

Evaluation of Our Storywriting Time
Student Worksheet

Name _____

Date _____

1. Write the *title* or *topic* of the piece of writing that you are working on today.

   _____

2. What *steps* have you completed today? (Look at the posters.)

   _____

   _____

3. I FOLLOWED THE STEPS TO STORYWRITING OR THE STEPS TO PUBLISHING WITHOUT ASKING THE TEACHER ANY UNNECESSARY QUESTIONS. Yes or No?

   _____

4. I CO-OPERATED AND SHARED IDEAS WELL WITH OTHERS TODAY. Yes or No?

   _____

5. I WORKED QUIETLY AND DID NOT DISTURB OTHERS AROUND ME. Yes or No?

   _____

6. I FEEL THAT I WORKED WELL AND GOT A LOT ACCOMPLISHED.

SELF-EVALUATION

Excellent	= 1
Very good	= 2
Satisfactory	= 3
Just acceptable	= 4
Needs to improve	= 5

7. I WILL BE TAKING SOME OF MY WRITING HOME TO WORK ON. Yes or No?

_____

_____

Student Comments	Teacher Comments	Parent Comments

Student Worksheet: Evaluation of Published Books

The following worksheet may be filled out by students after they have completed their published books as a check to ensure that they have included everything that they need in their books. This worksheet also serves as positive motivation, for students are able to see directly where they need to improve.

Evaluation of Published Books
Student Worksheet

Name _____

Date _____

Title of the Book _____

1. Is your cover attractive with the title large and bright, with your full name, and with a colorful and meaningful picture?

2. Did you do your very neatest printing or writing?

3. Is your printing or writing spaced well on each page?

4. Is your writing straight across (not slanting) on each page? (You can use a liner to help you.)

5. Are your pictures neatly drawn?

6. Are your pictures large enough and well spaced on the page?

7. Are your pictures colorful? (If black and white drawings, did you use good shading techniques?)

8. Are your pictures detailed?

9. Did you sew your book carefully together?

10. Did you glue your book neatly? (no corners lifting, all pages lying flat?)

11. Did you add:
    - a dedication?
    - a title page (with title, author's name, illustrator's name, and publisher's name)?
    - a copyright date?
    - a Canadian author stamp (if appropriate)?
    - an envelope and borrower's card (with title and author's name)?
    - an "About the Author" page (with photograph, if desired)?
    - other?

Student Worksheet: Evaluation of a "Choose Your Own Adventure" Book

The following worksheet is a self-evaluation or checklist for students to fill out after they have completed a "Choose Your Own Adventure" book.

Evaluation of Your "Choose Your Own Adventure" Book

1. Is this book an example of your very best and neatest handwriting or printing (or typing)?
2. Are the pictures colorful and appropriate?
3. Do you have *enough* pictures in the book to make your book look colorful and complete?
4. Is your cover neat and colorful with your full name and title on it?
5. Do you have page numbers and directions on each page?
6. Do you have at least four (4) endings?
7. Are your endings varied and different? Did you use your imagination?
8. Are your pages organized in the correct order according to the plan of your flow chart?
9. Did you check to see if spelling, punctuation, and/or grammar mistakes have been corrected in this final good copy?
10. Did you use the front and back of each page? (This is certainly more difficult to do than using every other page.)

Name of book _____

Author's Name _____

CHAPTER 12

Conclusion

As with any new venture — especially one concerned with human values, attitudes, feelings, and expressions — this approach to writing involves risk-taking on the part of both students and teachers. New activities are experimented with, emotions are exposed, frustrations and, sometimes, apprehensiveness and insecurity are experienced. However, the gains of writing are well worth the effort.

We have to remember, above all, that writing is a *process* that takes *time* to develop. It does not happen overnight and it does not happen in a vacuum. We need to be committed and patient, persistent and self-disciplined. We need to keep trying, keep refining our practices and ideas, and keep *writing*.

The writing process described in this book refers to all the problem-solving activities that go into writing. It covers everything a person does from the time of first contemplation of topic where the writer actively sets goals and constructs the means to meet those goals, to the task of putting pencil to paper, to the triumph of completing the writing, to the moments of sharing the writing with others. The writing process is discovered through the *act of writing* — regularly and often. It is improved through discussion, interaction, and sound instructional input. It is an elaboration of feeling, thinking, and learning which can overflow into all areas of the curriculum and into all areas of life. Students and teachers will ultimately gain self-confidence, a sense of pride and achievement, motivation, and enthusiasm for learning.

The writing process is a challenging, rewarding, and exciting experience for both student and teacher. It is an important **must** for every classroom and for every school.

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This book focusses on the writing process and is directed to elementary school teachers who wish to improve their writing programs. Practical step-by-step procedures on implementing the writing process in the classroom are presented; sample activities are illustrated. The student evaluation sheets containing questions aimed at helping children evaluate their own work will be especially useful to teachers.

By presenting the stages of writing for students in the same order that professional writers follow — pre-writing, drafting, conferencing, editing, and publishing — and by emphasizing co-operative learning activities for children as part of this process, **All Write!** seeks to instill in both teacher and student an enthusiastic response to the process of writing.

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